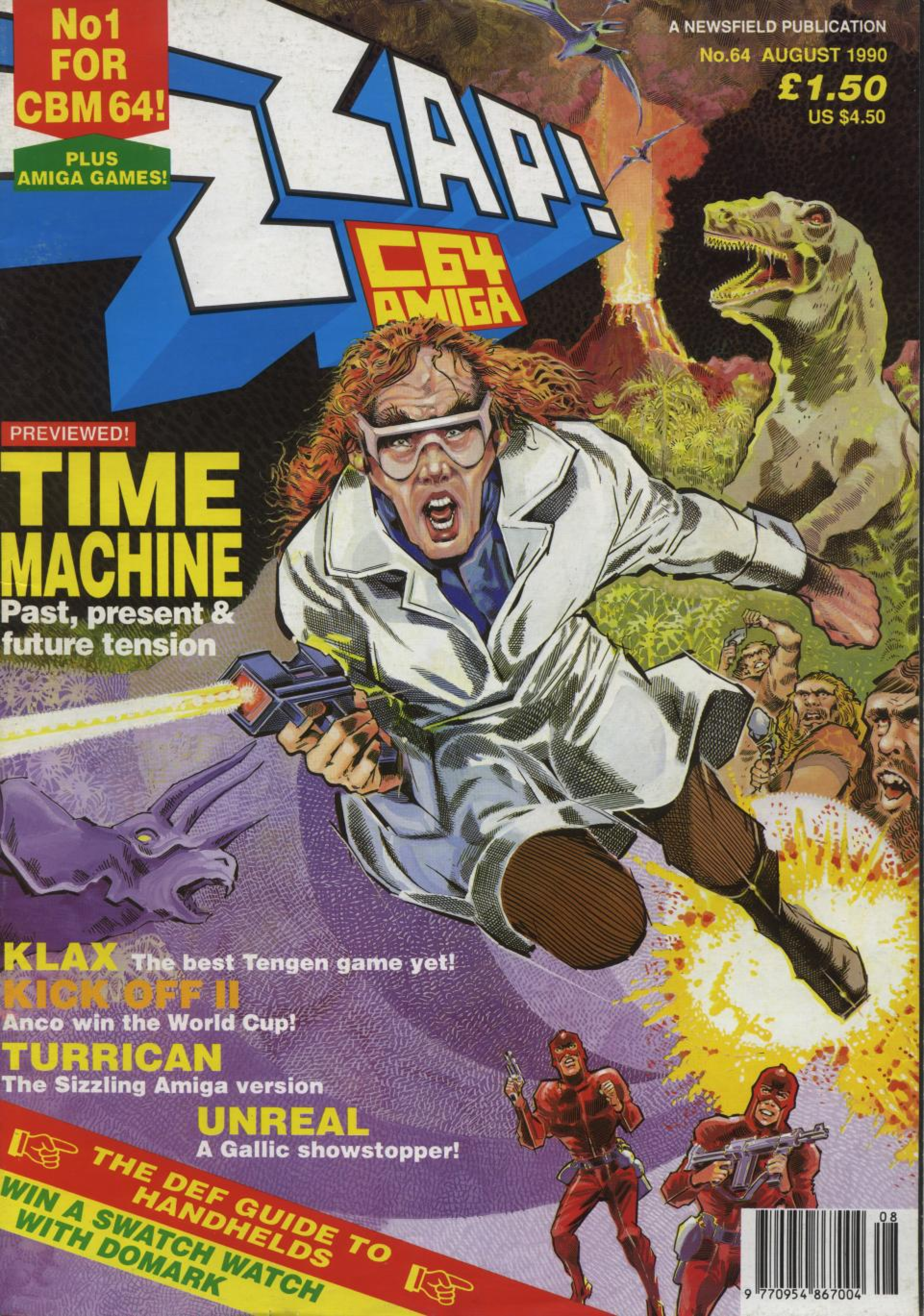
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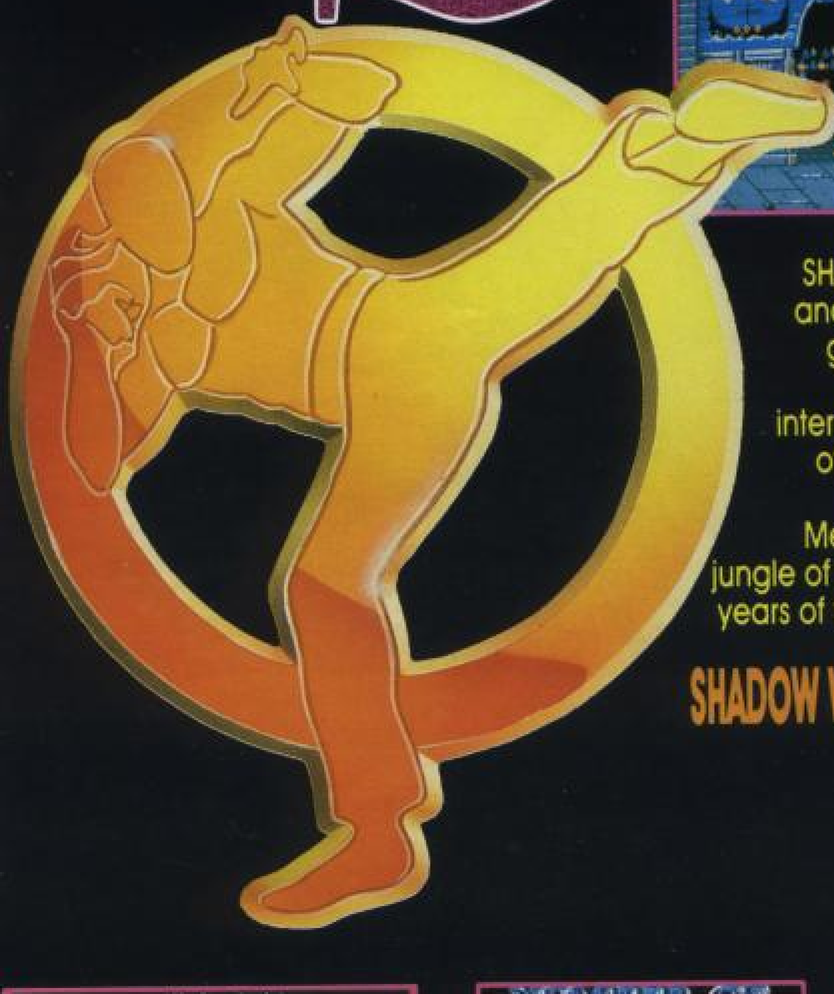
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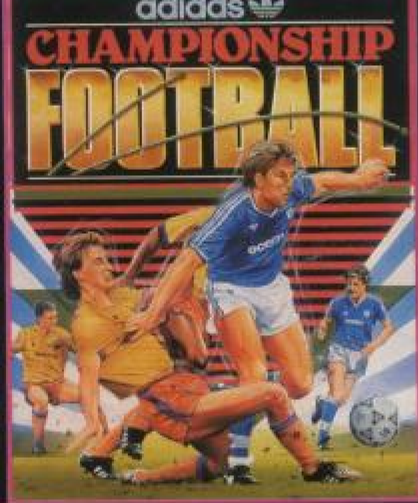
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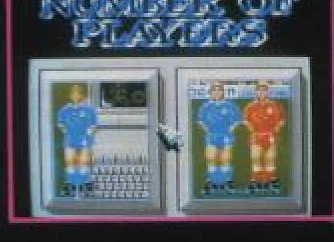
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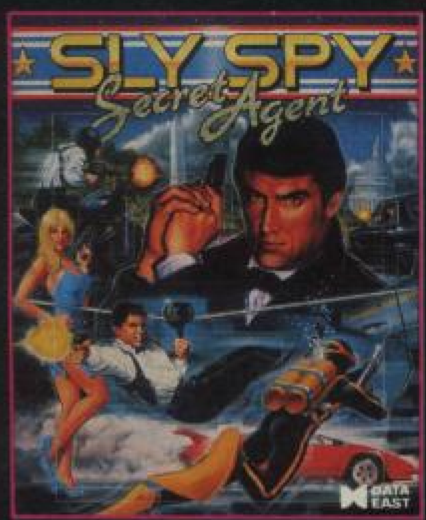
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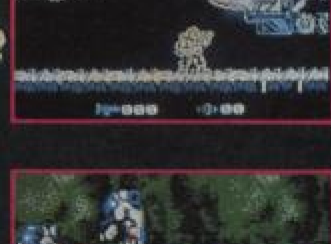


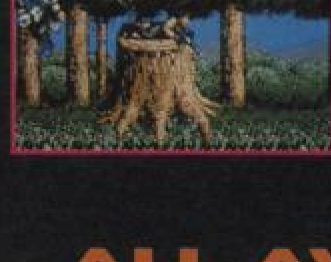
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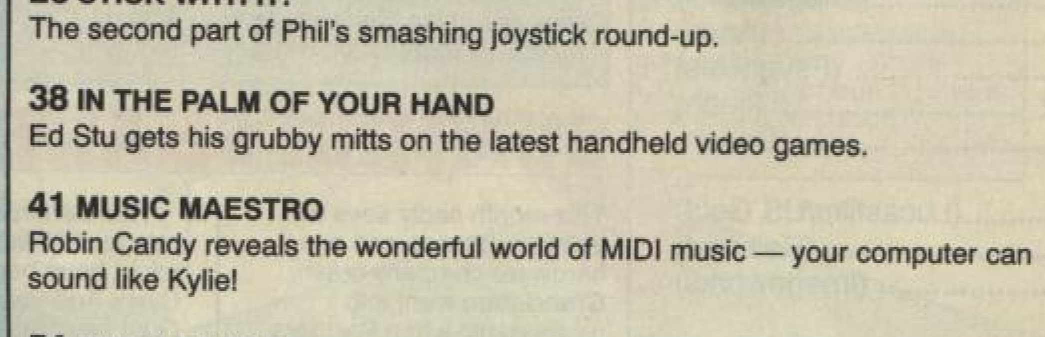
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THE August CHARTS

This month's £20 software voucher goes to Robert Bennett of Walthamstow. We're not getting quite as many entries as we'd like, so keep Robin (the current charts minion) counting — send those votes (your fave top three for each chart) to *The Charts, ZZAP!, Newsfield, The Case Mills, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1JW.*

TOP 10 C64 GAMES

1. **Rainbow Islands** .... (Ocean)
2. **Turrican** .... (Rainbow Arts)
3. **The Untouchables** .... (Ocean)
4. **International 3-D Tennis** .... (Palace)
5. **Stunt Car Racer** .... (MicroStyle)
6. **Project: Stealth Fighter** .... (MicroProse)
7. **Toobin'** .... (Tengen/Domark)
8. **Ghouls 'N' Ghosts** .... (Capcom/US Gold)
9. **Turbo Out Run** .... (US Gold)
10. **Emlyn Hughes' International Soccer** (Audiogenic)

AMIGA GAMES

1. **Kick Off** .... (Anco)
2. **F-29 Retaliator** .... (Ocean)
3. **Xenon 2** .... (Imageworks)
4. **Player Manager** .... (Anco)
5. **Blood Money** .... (Psygnosis)
6. **Operation Thunderbolt** .... (Ocean)
7. **Rainbow Islands** .... (Ocean)
8. **Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain** .... (Lucasfilm/US Gold)
9. **Midwinter** .... (Rainbird)
10. **Speedball** .... (Imageworks)

C64 MUSIC

1. **Ghouls 'N' Ghosts** .... (Tim Follin)
2. **Turbo Out Run** .... (Maniacs of Noise)
3. **The Untouchables** .... (Matthew Cannon)
4. **Batman: The Movie** .... (Matthew Cannon)
5. **Hot Rod** .... (Maniacs of Noise)

AMIGA MUSIC

1. **Batman: The Movie** .... (Jonathan Dunn)
2. **Xenon 2** .... (David Whittaker)
3. **Shadow Of The Beast** .... (David Whittaker)
4. **Blood Money** .... (Ray Norrish)
5. **Double Dragon 2** .... (Tomas Dahlgren/S Barratt/R Aplin)

COIN-OPS

1. **Special Criminal Investigation** .... (Taito)
2. **Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles** .... (Konami)
3. **Turbo Out Run** .... (Sega)
4. **Chase HQ** .... (Taito)
5. **Operation Thunderbolt** .... (Taito)

DAYS OF THUNDER

Tom Cruise's latest movie is widely expected to the summer's biggest movie in the States. Produced by the people responsible for *Top Gun*, *Days Of Thunder* follows Cruise's campaign to win the NASCAR championship. Mindscape have the computer game licence, but are specifically prohibited from using Cruise's face anywhere in the game! The Amiga version is due out in September, programmed by Creative *Rotox* Materials, with the C64 version following a few months later.

Needless to say Ocean have an extremely impressive movie line-up, including *RoboCop 2* — directed by Irvin *The Empire Strikes Back* Kershner from a script by Frank Miller, the man who revitalized Batman in *The Dark Knight Returns* graphic novel. His plot has Robo fighting would be replacement, Robo 2, a dramatic creation by the ED 209 animator. Shots have already appeared in European magazines of the 16-bit version, looking not unlike the original game. The C64 version is in the hands of Richard *New Zealand Story* Palmer.

The *RoboCop 2* movie cost twice as much as the original to make, but that's still peanuts compared to *Total Recall*. Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and directed by Paul *RoboCop* Verhoeven, this action adventure flick is loosely based on a Philip *Blade Runner* Dick short story. Much of the action is based on Mars and, like *RoboCop*, there's plenty of gore.

Back in the *Top Gun* vein Ocean probably have the rights to *Firebird*, which has some brave American pilots proving themselves in combat. In this case it's set in South America with Apache gunship helicopters taking on the drug runners. The US Army loaned up to 100 helicopters in the expectation of boosting recruitment. Get your Army haircut now! Yet more military action is in *Navy SEALs*, American Sea, Air and Land marines take on terrorists in Lebanon. Starring Charlie Sheen, it's being pixelated by John *Untouchables* Meegan.

Yet more expensive hardware is featured in *Flight Of The Intruder*, *Top Gun* goes to Vietnam basically. It's based on Stephen Coonts's bestseller novel, currently being turned into a movie, and Mirrorsoft have the *Falcon* people writing the 16-bit only computer game version. Other Mirrorsoft products include *Back To The Future II*, coming very soon to coincide with the video release, and *III* which has Fox and co. zooming back to the Wild West.

Nostalgia buffs should also enjoy Disney's epic *Dick Tracy* starring Warren Beatty as Dick, and Madonna as night club moll Breathless Mahoney. The highly stylized film was shot to resemble the comic strip, supposedly using just seven colours. Titus have the European and Australian rights to both *Dick* and the loathesome *Arachnophobia* movie (starring Big Bob, a massive bird-eating spider). There will also be some educational and utility releases using the Disney name. Expect *Tracy* to be released across all formats around September time.

SUMMER SHAKEOUT

This month sadly sees two software houses and one hardware company crash. **Grandslam** went into receivership when Barclays bank pulled the plug, calling in their loans after a prolonged attempt to find a rescuer failed. The long-delayed *Liverpool FC* now looks to be in limbo, as does a new *Hunt For Red October* game to tie-in with the highly successful film. The two-and-a-half-year-old Grandslam label was established by Stephen Hall, who bought Argus Press Software in 1987. The new label owned such famous names as Bugbyte and Quicksilva, as well as having a sales and marketing deal with German software house Thalion — now with US Gold. Probably Grandslam's most famous release was the much hyped *Running Man*, which wasn't that good. But there were good conversions of *Pacmania* and *Pacland*, while *Thunderbirds* was a first-rate arcade adventure which might have begun a series of Gerry Anderson conversions. On a new, Shades label there was also a good *Mario Bros*-type game called *Terry's Big Adventure*. But releases were irregular and they never really hit the big time.

The other software house to go under is the North East's **Tynesoft**, a real industry veteran which had one of the first licence-based products with *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*. Other tie-ins include *Supergran*, *Superman* and most recently *Beverly Hills Cop*. Sadly gameplay rarely matched the packaging, and its best game was probably *Buffalo Bill's Rodeo Games*. But a form of life after death ensures the survival of Northeast software with programming house Horrorsoft, whose *Elvira* adventure was to be published by Tynesoft. Horrorsoft is still afloat and

AMIGA CD ROM CONSOLE



Commodore's CD ROM Amiga, reported in Issue 59, has finally been launched in America. Called the CDTV, or Commodore Dynamic Total Vision, it looks like a standard CD player and would fit into anyone's hifi set-up. The machine will get its official UK launch at the EMAP show on September 13, with shipments to the high street following soonish. The price should be £699 and is unsurprisingly being pushed as 'for all the family'. DIY, cooking and encyclopedia products are included among the 100 non-game titles which should be available by Xmas time. By contrast only 15-20 games are planned, with such software houses as Ocean, Domark, Mindscape, Virgin and Activision working on CDTV releases. Commodore talk about the machine emulating the massive, 'every home should have one' success of video recorders. Deals with rental chains are being considered, and a multi-million autumn Commodore advertising offensive should ensure most people know about it.

But what, precisely is it? The heart of the machine is a standard one megabyte Amiga. Peripherals styled to match the CDTV include an external 3.5 inch disk drive and infra-red keyboard which would allow you to use it like a normal Amiga. Similarly, the CD-ROM unit can be used as a straightforward CD player, which can be connected to your amplifier or listened to through its headphone socket. The exciting bit is its storage potential, a single CD ROM disk has a capacity equivalent to 720 floppy disks or over 660 megabytes. This information is Read-Only, but there's a smart card facility which allows users to save 64K on them. This would be perfect for save-games, of course. The machine is also compatible with CD-G, the limited computer generated graphics which are now appearing on some CD albums such as Lou Reed's *New York*. These consist mainly of displaying the lyrics to go with the music.

Prices for the CD ROM discs are likely to be less than £50, as Commodore definitely intend it to be a mass market machine. Whether it succeeds in this obviously depends on the strength of the software, which remains firmly under wraps at the moment. On the positive side CDTV offers an Amiga and CD player at a very reasonable price. Lots of software houses are interested and the potential is high for good value compilations and incredible software. However, it's pricey and its flexibility is limited without an external 3.5″ disk drive and keyboard. Another drawback is the lack of plans for a CD-ROM drive upgrade for A500 owners, nor is it CD-I. Compact Disk Interactive is the new format being developed by Philips. This allows film sequences to be shown directly on-screen with computer graphic overlays, a £700 price point is being suggested for that too, but its launch date is at least a year away. Nevertheless Commodore have taken a bold step forward with the CDTV, and we hope to have a look at one very soon.

negotiating with other publishers for the game's eventual release.

This month sees the end of an era with Oli Frey, whose paintings have graced all 63 of the previous issues, taking time off to spend more time administering the Newsfield empire.

But from now on the ZZAP! covers will be painted by a variety of artists, with Ron Smith making his Newsfield debut on Issue 64 of ZZAP! 64. Ron has had a long and distinguished career, working on the first UK Marvel comics in 1974, drawing Judge Dredd for eight years and even doing the Green Cross Code Man! He's also painted covers for Iron Maiden, Sigue Sigue Sputnik and most recently Rock Machine. While still contributing to 2000AD, he's found time to immortalize Professor Potts for this issue.

C64 CONSOLE

Rumours of a C64 console, first mentioned in Issue 60, have finally been confirmed by Commodore UK president, Steve Franklin. The C64GS will be intended to take on the Nintendo console with predicted sales figures in the region of 100,000. American company Mindscape have already announced they'll be releasing *Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O' Fun* on cartridge, and are very enthusiastic about it. They believe it'll reduce one of the biggest problems with the European market, namely piracy, and offer them a bigger market for titles which could previously only be done on disk. The Gold Medal-winning *Space Rogue* is one obvious candidate for conversion, while even more excitingly they've already started development on two games written for the cartridge from scratch.

Considering the depth of most Mindscape games they're not too worried about the cartridge price tag — £24.95. This is obviously pricey for a standard C64 shoot-'em-up, but enhanced versions and compilations are all likely. The price of the console itself is likely to be less than £100. Its intended market is first-time buyers, as C64 owners should be able to use cartridges via the existing port. By contrast the console won't have a cassette port, after all you need a keyboard to load tapes, and is intended to be sold alongside the standard C64, which will continue to be promoted in special packs.

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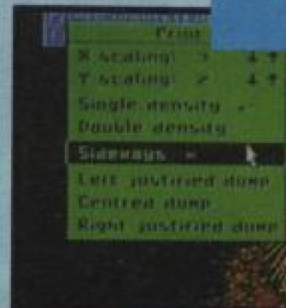
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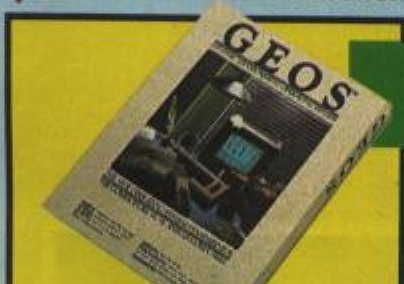
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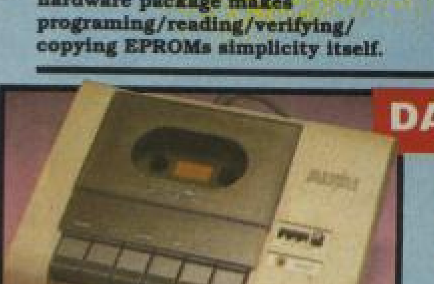
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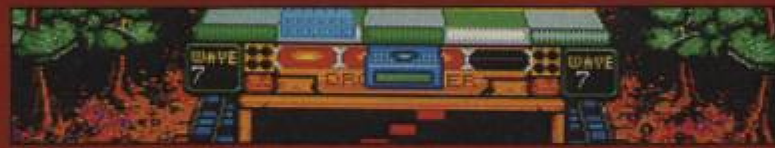
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KLa



▼ You need fifteen Klaxes to finish this level and everything's nice and slow at the moment. (C64)



Domark/Tengen, C64 £9.99, £14.99; Amiga £19.99

'A night on the tiles' could soon have a new definition. No longer will it mean a spree of drinking and debauchery (shame! — Phil), but instead a night *in* playing one of the most addictive coin-op conversions ever. *Klax*'s concept is simple: catch tiles as they approach and flip them into one of five bins to make rows of three or more of the same colour — Klaxes. When a Klax is made, the tiles disappear causing any tiles above to drop down — sometimes resulting in a chain reaction of Klaxes. Flashing 'wild' tiles can count as any colour and can even be used to simultaneously complete two or more Klaxes of different colours.

Fail to catch a tile and it will drop off-screen registering on your drop meter (sort of like lives). When this is full it'll cost you one of several continue-plays, as will overfilling all the bins with tiles — they can only hold five each. To ease the pressure, up to five tiles can be stacked onto your catching 'paddle' for later use.

The game comprises 100 tile waves. These must be completed in a particular way: either by scoring enough points, surviving a set number tiles, or getting enough Klaxes (on some waves only horizontal or diagonal ones will do). At the start of the game, and after every five waves, a warp screen allows you to choose which of three levels to attempt next — harder levels have a larger drop meter (up to five drops allowed) and carry huge points bonuses.



X



Of the two versions, the C64 is marginally the more impressive with it all crammed into a single load. The graphics aren't astounding, but there's several different backgrounds and the tiles move well. At the start of a level the tiles only come one at a time, the C64 can't vary the speed and numbers as smoothly as the Amiga, but pulling down on the joystick speeds them up very nicely. But watch out! after a couple dozen tiles things are soon moving at a cracking pace. Now you'll need to start chucking tiles back as the speed rivals anything seen on the Amiga. And while simply getting vertical Klaxes causes stress, but on later levels you need horizontal Klaxes, diagonals and so on. Then there are the warps to activate, all of which makes what seems a very simple idea, in practice complex and extremely addictive.

The Amiga version doesn't push the host machine as much as the C64. The tunes are banal, although there is some speech, and the graphics could've been better — the restricted ST palette is again in evidence. But 16-bit power ensures a smoother progression from the easy start levels to the manic overload later on. There's also a very nice simultaneous two-player option (although it makes no sense for the continue-plays to be shared) and a price tag of just $20. All in all, two extremely playable conversions of one of the most playable coin-ops around. The only serious flaw I can see, is that the miserable Phil creature has so much luck with it. Trying to keep up with him in two-player mode fairly made the old optical circuits water, but I'm sure some reader will be able to beat his high score soon enough. Definitely recommended.



On certain levels getting a 'Big X' (two crossing diagonal rows of five!) will automatically warp you to a much later level.
The Amiga game boasts a two-player option which splits the screen vertically, allowing two Klaxers to play simultaneously and completely independently from each other.

As the title screen says, this is the 90s and hopefully Klax will show the way forward with its simple ideas and yet totally compelling gameplay. There's something fascinating and very satisfying about creating order from putting down blocks. Unlike clever dick Phil I have enough problems coping with Diagonal Klax waves without contemplating constructing a Big X Klax, but *Klax* is immense fun to play with a skill level and learning curve for all types of player. It's a great game to just pick up and play but I found it very difficult to pull myself away from it to write this comment: 'rather an addictive game' is an understatement. Sure, the graphics aren't awesome but they're well drawn and serve their purpose. The 'klacking' sound effects also work well, creating an atmosphere of panic. On the C64 it suffers somewhat in graphic detail but at least it plays as good as its 16-bit counterpart and that's what counts.



This is even better (and, believe it or not, more addictive) than *Tetris*! As well as being far more visually exciting, it benefits from more varied gameplay with the different types of wave requiring vastly different tactics — horizontal and diagonal lines are particularly difficult to obtain. Despite the concept's simplicity, things are far from easy — especially when the bins are almost full and you're frantically trying to get Klaxes to empty them. Somehow you have to simultaneously watch five bins of tiles, the approaching tiles, plus the ones on your paddle, and make an immediate decision on what to do! Things can get even more frustrating if a 'friend' is looking over your shoulder giving you 'help', so the continue-plays and choice of levels to warp to are welcome features.

The Amiga game isn't amazing technically (though it's virtually identical to the coin-op) but the simultaneous two-player mode is great fun, especially when you both compete for the highest score. However, it's the incredibly addictive action that impresses and, on both machines, *Klax* is by far the best Tengen conversion yet. It's so easy to pick up and play (if you can put it down in the first place!), this is one game that definitely won't be gathering dust on a shelf in six months' time.

64

PRESENTATION 80%
Amazingly it's all in one load. Continue-plays avoid frustration. Warps allow easy access to later levels.

GRAPHICS 71%
Several different backgrounds. The approaching rotating tiles are well done, 'enlarging' realistically as they get nearer but other than these there's little else.

SOUND 69%
Jolly tunelets between waves, informative FX.

HOOKABILITY 92%
Play it once and you'll be hooked...

LASTABILITY 91%
...for a very long time!

OVERALL 92%
The best Tengen conversion yet.

amiga

PRESENTATION 85%
Continue-plays and level warps. Clever simultaneous two-player mode. Informative attract mode.

GRAPHICS 74%
Though not really impressive the graphics work well.

SOUND 80%
Surreal sampled speech between waves. 'Klacking' rotating tile FX plus little tunelets/sampled speech for certain Klaxes.

HOOKABILITY 92%
Easy to learn and incredibly addictive.

LASTABILITY 91%
It'll take a long time to master with 100 progressively harder waves which wrap round.

OVERALL 92%
A superb conversion, great value for money at under £20.

ZZAP! TEST

ADIDAS CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL



Ocean, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk (Limited Edition games come with free 'World In Motion' cassette single)

This imaginary competition is between 23 of the world's best football teams, plus Wales. You can pick which country to control and whether one or two players will participate. In the latter case, players can only play head-to-head if their teams meet in the draw.

The actual game is in the *Kick Off* style: overhead view, multi-directional scrolling and manual dribbling. Rather than having the ball glued to your foot, it's pushed forward by small kicks. To kick it for a longer distance, holding down fire gives the desired effect; you can also change the angle of elevation by pressing fire quickly.

You must be careful not to tackle from behind, giving away free kicks. Particularly nasty fouls result in a yellow card. There's also the normal corner kicks, goal kicks and penalties plus an option to save the game.



If you thought the England vs Eire game was bad, you ain't seen nothing yet! *Adidas* is totally unplayable due to its weird control system with totally unusable shot power — a *Match Day II*-style pulsing kickometer would have been far better. Without instinctive controls it's impossible to play skilfully. With a four-part multiload and omission of two-player friendlies *Adidas* is parrot-sickeningly bad.



After all this time it's a pity *Adidas* has turned out to be so bad a game. On the positive side it's tried to emulate *Kick Off*'s superb simulated dribbling, but unfortunately failed. The system's much too fiddly, with the gauges too small to be easily seen. An even more fundamental mistake is that while obviously the main aim of gameplay is blast the ball up and down the field, the screen is much wider than it is long. The large instrument panel would've been better placed vertically, or made smaller. And to top it all, there's an horrendous multiload.

amiga

A review next month.

update

PRESENTATION 45%
Audio cassette, competition entry form and attractive options screens cannot compensate for an agonizing multiload and awkward two-player option.

GRAPHICS 59%
Decent overhead-view sprites, but illogical screen layout.

SOUND 75%
Good intro tune, usual whistle and kick in-game FX.

HOOKABILITY 36%
Awkward to get into with fiddly control system...

LASTABILITY 39%
...so although it's challenging, most won't persevere.

OVERALL 37%
Plays worse than Wales!

A.M.C.

Dinamic, C64 £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

The Astro Marine Corp demands more of its members than the ability to endure an excruciatingly embarrassing hairstyle. No, you've also got to survive solo suicide missions such as saving the planet Dendar from the alien Deathbringers.

As with most Dinamic releases, the program consists of two games, with the latter accessible only by a codeword given when you complete the first. Your objective in the first game is to fight your way to Deathbringer's ship through eight horizontally-scrolling zones packed with monsters such as massive walkers and carnivorous plants. Capsules can be picked up to give extra lives, flamethrower and temporary invulnerability.

The second game has you arriving on the Deathbringer's home planet to battle through eight more levels.



Dinamic don't seem to have advanced after *Game Over*; this is a very repetitive and dull game. Walking right and blasting everything in your path soon becomes boring, especially as it's so difficult. There's nothing new here, and even the Maniacs Of Noise have somehow produced a poor tune. The best thing about it are the graphics which, although Spectrum-like, work well.



Life in the military can be short, dull and over with abrupt brutality. So *AMC* may well pass as an accurate military sim. Yomping ever onwards against a relentless enemy attack, typically involving just one new alien endlessly repeated on a level soon gets tedious. Mixing up the aliens more, with greater attention to gameplay could've produced a lot better result. Certainly the graphics are imaginative, with some impressively large baddies, although a bit Spectrumesque.

▼ About to be stomped on by one of the many walkers in the first half of *AMC*!



amiga

The Amiga version's due out any day now.

update

PRESENTATION 67%
Password for second game, redefine keys option.

GRAPHICS 68%
Spectrumesque but imaginative.

SOUND 44%
Dull spot FX or irritating tune.

HOOKABILITY 48%
Difficult with plenty of nasty traps.

LASTABILITY 38%
Action is repetitive.

OVERALL 39%
Could turn even Robin Hogg into a pacifist.

MASTERS OF THE ARCADE CHALLENGE!

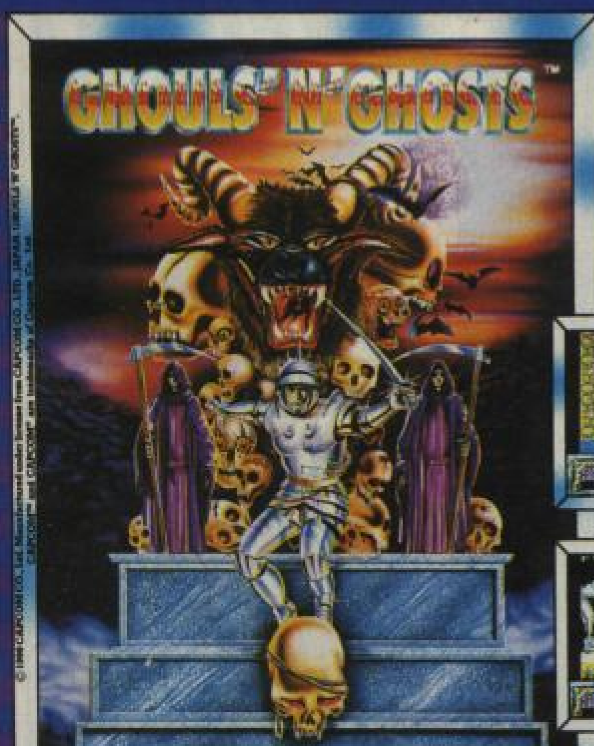




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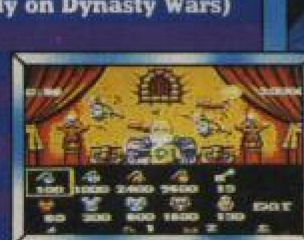
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Screen shots from various formats







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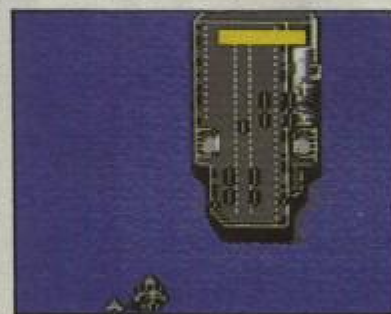
SONIC BOOM

Activision, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99



This game comes with a shocking lack of plot to cover up nakedly unoriginal gameplay. Indeed, older gamesplayers should cover their eyes as *Sonic Boom* doesn't even bother with imaginative graphics to clothe the bare bones of yet another vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up. Why, you only need to squint and you can see *Xevious*!

Judging from the cover we have yet another brave American pilot engaged in a bid to save the world. The Enemy has seized military bases the world over, and our square-jawed hero must fight through six multiloaded levels to win. At the end of each level there's a superbaddie and if you don't destroy him on the first pass, the screen scrolls back to let you have another go. To help you on your mission extra equipment can be taken from red and yellow parachutes. The former give you mini-planes to escort you, the latter increases the power of your shots. Needless to say that famous thief Death nicks all these add-on weapons.

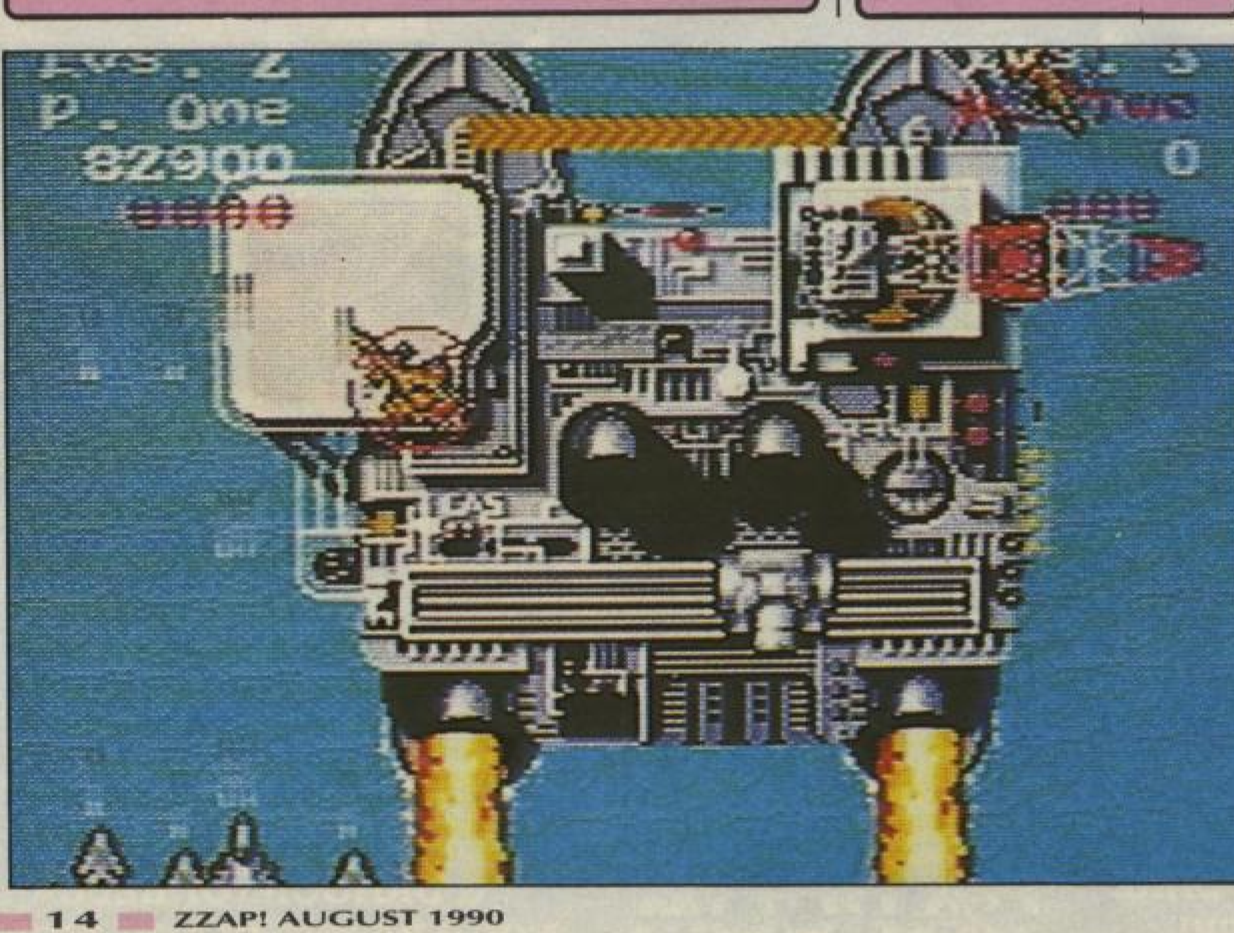


I can't understand why Activision have converted this ancient (1987) Sega coin-op. If you're going to release a vertically shoot-'em-up nowadays it really has to be something special. This certainly doesn't apply to *Sonic Boom* whose basic 'shoot everything that comes at you' action makes *Xevious* look sophisticated. To perfectly complement the tedious gameplay the graphics and sound are dull on both machines, and the whole game resembles a dodgy *SEUCK* effort.



Both versions have attractive and well moving graphics but the gameplay is so tired I frequently found myself falling asleep. Especially after the very similar *Scramble Spirits* this is an excellent cure for insomnia. The Amiga game at least boasts a two-player option, but unfortunately it's only for alternate play! The C64 game suffers particularly from high difficulty, no continue-plays and the inevitable multiload hassle. Neither game is really bad, but neither do they have anything which is likely to keep you playing for long.





64

PRESENTATION 60%
No continue-plays and no scenario, multiload levels all on side two for ease of use.

GRAPHICS 61%
Decent amount of detail on varied backdrops, sprites repetitive and overall lacking imagination.

SOUND 52%
Mediocre in-game tune and poor spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 61%
Simplistic gameplay makes it easy to get into...

LASTABILITY 52%
...but high difficulty level means there's a lot of multiloading while lack of originality and imagination further diminish appeal.

OVERALL 52%
Another vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up... yawn.

amiga

PRESENTATION 65%
Continue-plays and alternate two-player option are worthwhile additions.

GRAPHICS 67%
Again plenty of detail on the backdrops and some good end-of-level monsters.

SOUND 44%
Repetitive console-type in-game tune plus minimal FX.

HOOKABILITY 61%
Quite playable, but there's nothing special to get you hooked...

LASTABILITY 57%
...while later levels offer little new, apart from some okay graphics.

OVERALL 58%
At least it's not as difficult as the C64 game.

VENOM WING

Thalamus, Amiga £19.99



▲ The vertically-scrolling level one, complete with falling fireballs and a wall-like mega-guardian that darts forward to attack.

Why would anyone try to break into a heavily defended citadel? For the lashings of loot inside, of course. But you're different, you're in it for the kicks (just as well considering the low exchange rate of computer game money!).
The treasure trove is protected by four multiloaded fortresses: levels one and three are vertically-scrolling, the others horizontally-scrolling. All show the ship side-on.
To help you there's the customary power-ups: collecting one gives you triple fire, a second gives you a drone. In team-play mode player two can control this. A third power-up briefly changes you into an invulnerable eagle.



Venom Wing is a professional production using the Amiga to its best with impressive mega-guardians, extensive use of colour and shading, and masses of smoothly moving aliens swirling in precise formations. But the concept has been done to death before. It smacks of Amiga *R-Type* and the style of the Konami coin-ops but it's even harder than them. Inevitable perhaps, since there's only four levels (somewhat disappointing but each level, bar the first, is reassuringly long). A technically clever reworking of the traditional shoot-'em-up, *Venom Wing* should please Amiga owners eager to show off their machine.



It's overload time with this one, a shoot-'em-up which really pushes the Amiga. The blitter is used almost constantly, with several huge aliens being thrown around. Then there's the numerous swirling alien formations where each alien is intricately detailed and animated. All this combined with the vivid colour scheme and good sound FX almost obscures the fact that there isn't anything particularly new about the gameplay. But at £20 it's a good buy and makes programmer/graphic artist Pieter Opdam someone to watch out for.

64

No plans for a C64 game.

update

PRESENTATION 73%
Two continue-plays, high scores saved to disk and okay Psygnosis-style intro.
Alternate and drone two-player modes.

GRAPHICS 86%
Technically extremely impressive, parallax scrolling, some impressive baddies and slick animation.

SOUND 78%
Beautiful intro music, good FX.

HOOKABILITY 75%
Odd vertically scrolling level a bit tough to begin with, but you soon get the hang of it...

LASTABILITY 77%
...only four levels, but apart from level one they're all big and very tough.

OVERALL 77%

A fierce shoot-'em-up which shows off the Amiga in fine style for just £20.

PHOTON STORM

Arc, Amiga £19.99



The computer lightshow *Trip-A-Tron*, a Konix console game and ogling the Atari Lynx have all kept Jeff from his mutant camel blasters. But *Photon Storm* represents a return to the shoot-'em-up format with a Minteresque mix of *Sinistar* and *Star Gate*.

Your ship is mouse-controlled, with the left button for fire, right for thrust. If you hold down fire you can rotate the direction of fire independent from the way you're heading. Firing is the key to the game since to clear a level you have blast all the aliens. Help comes from 'Boost', a limited resource which doubles your speed, smart bombs and plutonium pods. Collect the latter for bonus points, but watch out if the enemies get a pod — once fuelled up the enemy Battlestar is an extremely formidable enemy! Beat the enemies and transportation to the next level is via a tunnel — you fly into the screen struggling with very sensitive controls.



Minter followers may be disappointed that there aren't any furry creatures or llamas, but that only serves to remind you of Minter's ability to add original ideas — as well as weird graphics — to classic shoot-'em-ups. *Photon Storm* is a homage to such brilliant coin-ops as *Star Gate* and I soon found myself completely absorbed. Neither graphics are sound are amazing; it's the simple but original gameplay which grabs.



I can't say I'm overly impressed by *Photon Storm*. Sure, it's playable enough with some classic shoot-'em-up action and some groovy psychedelic graphics. But shooting everything that moves soon gets repetitive and you soon realise there's little else to the game. Call me a llama, but I expect just a bit more sophistication from a 16-bit product costing £20. It's got no depth, man!

PRESENTATION 68%
'Fountain' pause mode, informative attract mode, infinite continue-plays and fun high score table.

GRAPHICS 75%
Lots of speed, detail and colour create a classic arcade feel.

SOUND 67%
Functional beeps and bangs with a title tune.

HOOKABILITY 74%
A couple of goes allow you to master the novel but very effective and friendly control system. Typical blaster appeal.

LASTABILITY 66%
Not much variety in gameplay, but high score freaks will love it.

OVERALL 69%

An innovative blast-'em-up with classic arcade appeal.



FIRE & BRIMSTONE

Firebird, £24.99

The Norse kingdom is under threat from Hel, the goddess of Niflheim, and has a mighty legion of demons to set traps and hurl weapons. The gods swiftly decide this is a job for Thor, the old hammer-swinger himself...

The kingdom is split into four lands, each a single load, which are completed by collecting all the pieces of a key and going through the door at the level's end. Scrolling is flickscreen, allowing each screen to have its own distinct puzzles and villains. Thor can carry two weapons, starting off with fireballs and a hammer, which can be swapped for different ones later on. He can also carry two potions, which can restore energy and create magical platforms to jump on — avoiding traps.



This reminds me too much of Film Planning to be enjoyable! But seriously, despite some attractive, characterful graphics the gameplay is very 8-bit — strange then that there won't be a C64 conversion. Despite the inclusion of various weapons and potions there isn't much to think about: the action is pretty straightforward, the main difficulty coming in the form of cruel traps. I'm afraid *Fire And Brimstone* isn't half as exciting as the title suggests.



There's nothing like a bit of fire and brimstone to remind me of home, but even I was a little daunted by the hellish difficulty of this aardvark. Each level is packed with nasty traps, many sprung so fast it's virtually impossible to react. This makes for much frustration at first. Although working out the solutions provides plenty of satisfaction eventually, the game is never completely addictive. The graphics are nice to look at but hardly awesome, and the FX are mediocre. Four levels aren't that much either: we've already completed level one. At £15 this would be good fun, but for £25 it's disappointing.

64

There are no plans for a C64 version.

update

PRESENTATION 66%
Okay intro section, ability to continue from a new level once reached.

GRAPHICS 70%
Imaginative but unspectacular with flickscreen scrolling.

SOUND 68%
Good intro tune, but dull in-game FX.

HOOKABILITY 70%
Tough and frustrating to begin with, though level one soon becomes enjoyable as the solution becomes apparent...

LASTABILITY 64%
...but later levels are more irritating and there aren't that many of them.

OVERALL 69%
A competent aardvark, but lacking anything new.

ghosts and goblins

Elite, Amiga £19.99
ONE MEG MACHINES ONLY!

Arthur is a bold knight and chivalrous gentleman, so when his lady love is kidnapped by the Demon King he instantly springs into action. Grabbing a clutch of lances he begins his challenging quest through six levels. The first level is fairly conventional, horizontally-scrolling with lots of baddies to shoot — including zombies rising from the ground. Some enemies carry sacks with weapons in them, ranging from the useless firebomb to the speedy dagger. More protection is provided by Art's armour, one hit strips him down to his undies but he can still carry on until the next hit.

Later levels include an ice palace, a burning bridge and plenty of moving platforms to jump on: making for one of the most imaginative coin-ops around, which *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts* so brilliantly followed up.



It's almost four years since the classic C64 version won a Gold Medal, still utterly brilliant due to great gameplay and programming. The Amiga version looks good as well, with more colours than the ST version and more background detail than *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts*. But the programming is disappointing, the scrolling is somewhat jerky horizontally and awful diagonally on level two. When the action heats up, things slow down. Still, this doesn't seriously affect gameplay and it remains a very good game. Worth a look.



The bad news is the poor programming; especially the terrible memory efficiency resulting in a 1Mb only game. The collision detection also seems a bit dodgy, though thankfully it's on the generous side. And for some reason Arthur can't turn around in mid-jump as he could on both the coin-op and the C64 version — very odd. The good news is that the technical anomalies are made up for by the classic coin-op's supreme playability.

▼ Old Art goes streaking again at the end of level one.



PRESENTATION 67%
Nice, short intro, alternate two-player mode, rapid quit option.

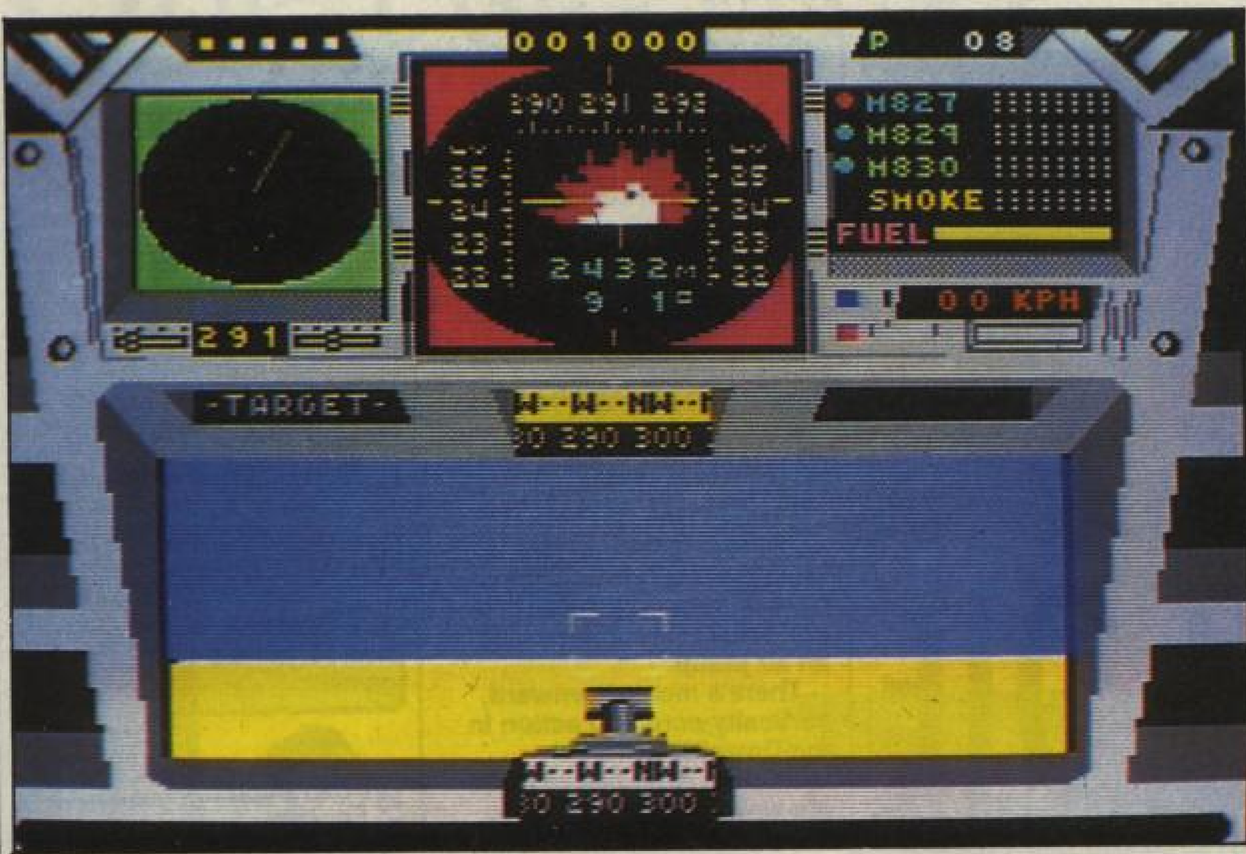
GRAPHICS 69%
Generally very good, with plenty of detail. Diagonal scrolling is poor, though.

SOUND 70%
Unspectacular, but effective rendition of melodramatic coin-op tunes and FX.

HOOKABILITY 78%
Instantly playable, with lots of lives to allow some progress...

LASTABILITY 72%
...but there's plenty of levels to be conquered with lots of variety.

OVERALL 73%
A nice looking and very playable conversion of one of 1986's best coin-ops. A pity there are no plans for a half-Meg version.



HEAVY METAL

Access/US Gold, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99

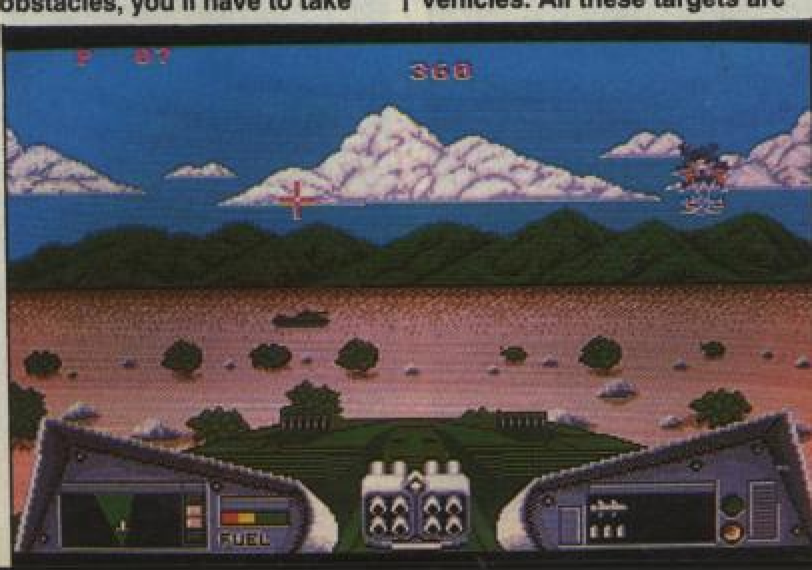
General E.E. 'Bud' Dink is a mean old coot, and he means to see you sweat blood as you make your way up through the ranks from trainee to five star general. But first you must qualify, earning at least 5,000 points on each of the 'combat sims'.

There are three arcade games, each based on a piece of hi-tech military hardware. The Fast Attack Vehicle is a beach buggy with guns and missiles strapped on. Sadly your buggy lacks brakes or a throttle: all you can do is move left or right and press fire. Apart from dodging the various obstacles, you'll have to take out helicopters and tanks.

With the Air Defence Anti-Tank (ADAT), you control the turret as zillions of MiG fighters and TR-80 tanks swarm towards your position. Aircraft can be totalled with both missiles and cannons, while tanks can only be destroyed by cannon fire. Missiles are fired by pressing 'space bar' when brackets appear around a target indicating lock-on. The joystick is used to control a cursor aiming the cannon.

The most expensive weapon is the M1A1 Abrams Main Battle Tank (MBT). You're in sole command with plenty of sensors above the small window showing the battlefield with its vector graphic enemy vehicles. All these targets are as animated sprites in the periscope view. You can either turn the tank to face them, or just the gun turret. Then you can set the gun elevation to match the laser rangefinder's suggestion. You can also dispense smoke to break the lock of an enemy rangefinder.

Once you've scored enough points on these arcade games you qualify as a military commander, going to the Tactical Command Centre. This shows a map view of the battlefield. Your can order your FAV, MBT and ADAT units to Engage (enemy unit), Move and Resupply. But however good you are at strategy, defeat is virtually inevitable unless you participate. This takes you back into one of the three arcade games, with enemy forces calculated from the TACC game.





I'll get the worst bit over with first and say that the multiload (notably on tape) is just diabolical. After this things get better but not by much, there's a nice parallax scroll on the ADAT level and the FAV scene can be thrilling at first (until you realise how repetitive it quickly becomes). The tank scene sports nice close-up sprites but it's all in the *Echelon* mould for speed.

The Amiga game isn't particularly special, looking very much like the C64 game, but what really wound me up was the delay when you lose a life. There's some nice use of colour in the ADAT sub-game but it lacks major depth, the FAV lacks atmosphere or realism and the tank game is horribly simplistic. It would be alright if the wargame was great but it's so very, very simple. Save that £25 and get some *real* Heavy Metal, a touch of Faith No More perhaps.



The strategy here is fairly simple, which leaves us with the three arcade games. FAV is simply left/right fire and soon becomes monotonous, as does the ADAT air defence game. The tank game is the most complex, but it's pretty dull anyway with crude graphics. Once all the controls are mastered it's fun for a while, but the repetitiveness soon becomes irritating.

Ironically the game supplied free with C64 *Heavy Metal* is superior, *Beach Head* having an intelligently organized multiload and superior sub-games.

64

PRESENTATION 85%
Multiload is very bad on cassette, but *Beach Head* is free and pretty good.

GRAPHICS 70%
Impressive parallax scroll on ADAT, speedy FAV and not bad MBT section provide a good overall impression.

SOUND 60%
Standard spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 65%
Three arcade sections are fun to begin with...

LASTABILITY 53%
...but they're not that good.

OVERALL 57%
A dated game-style which lacks depth.

amiga

PRESENTATION 77%
Okay animated intro, demo, some nice presentation screens, ten save positions for service records.

GRAPHICS 60%
All three arcade games are quite attractive to look at, with nicely detailed graphics (except on the MBT) and fast movement.

SOUND 59%
Okay intro tune but dull spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 60%
Again the sub-games are initially enjoyable to play...

LASTABILITY 47%
...but the sub-games lack depth and the strategy is poor.

OVERALL 50%
A disappointing and dated mix of sub-games.



▲ The Snowboard Half Pipe, complete with sarcy comments from Rodney.

C64

SKI OR DIE

Electronic Arts, C64 £14.95 disk only

After becoming the world's best skateboarder in *Skate Or Die*, you've decided to take up a sport with a bit more challenge to such an amazing sportsman as yourself. So it's off to Rodney's Winter Wonderland to prove yourself the ultimate on skis...

The game begins with that entrepreneurial genius Rodney: once again he's got the hippest shop around and it's here you choose which event to compete in. There are five events in all, which can be entered individually or, once you think you're ready, as one massive competition with five points for first place down to one point for third. Up to eight players can participate, taking turns, although one event allows simultaneous two-player action.

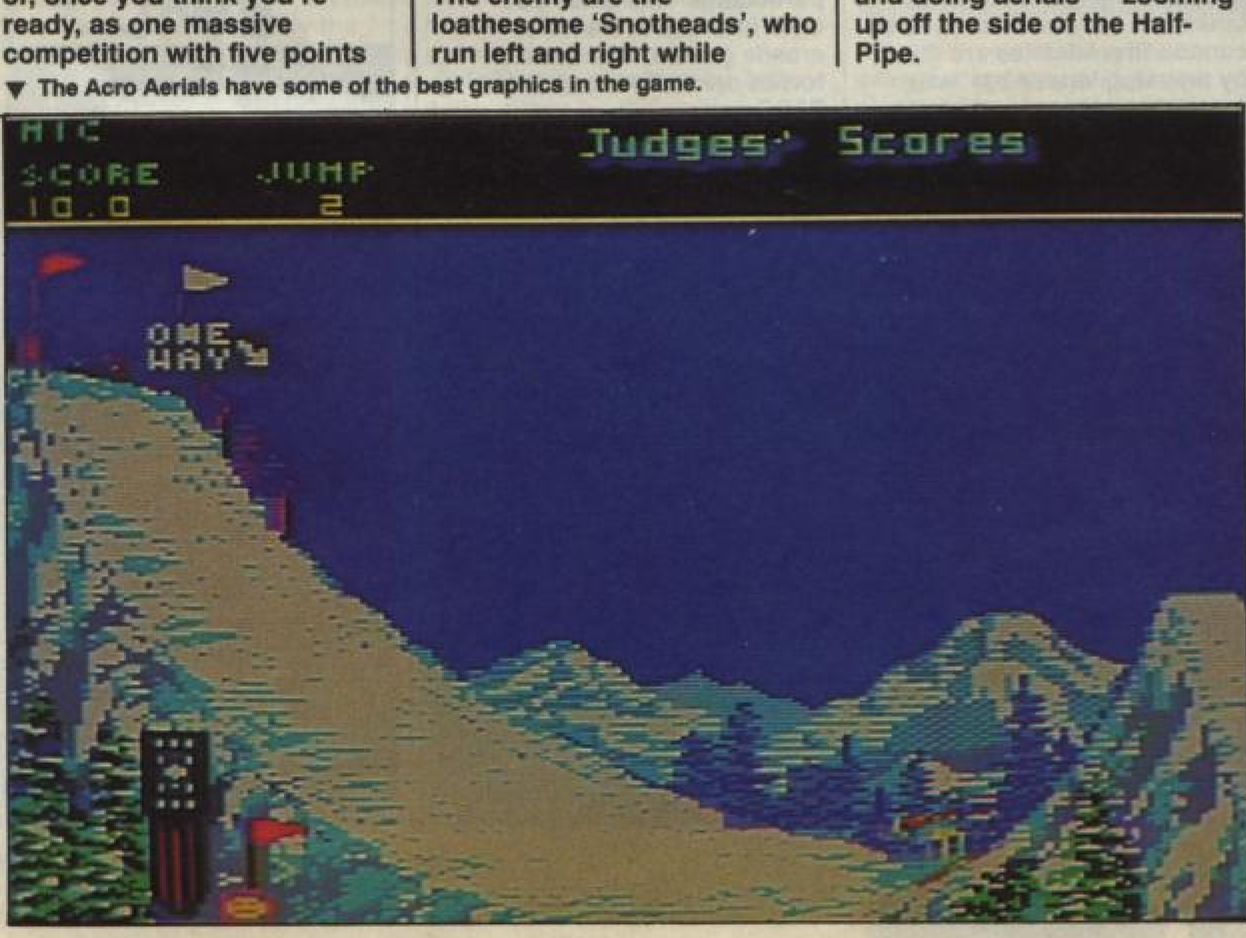
One of the most fun events is Snow Blast, an *Operation Wolf*-type game with snowballs instead of bullets. It's first-person perspective and you've got a cursor to aim your snowballs with. There are two fronts to defend on, north and south: different screens, neither of which scroll. You flick between the screens by pressing space according to where the most targets are. The enemy are the loathesome 'Snotheads', who run left and right while throwing snowballs at you. Hits cover you with snow, which can be scraped away if you collect a spade by shooting that icon. Other icons include penguins (extra points), snowballs (extra snowballs) and stars (unlimited snowballs for a short time).

After this you might go for an Innertube Thrash, a sort of Arctic version of *Toobin'*. One or two players can slide downhill in innertubes. Left/right rotates your tube, fire allows you to jab at your opponent with a fork or knife — if you've picked them up. This causes the punctured tube to slow down, but can you reflate by running over an air pump.

There's more downward, vertically-scrolling action in the Downhill Blitz. An individual skier has to make his way down a mountain side. There are various paths, most interrupted by deep ravines which have to be jumped. You can also do tricks, but speed is most important here.

But tricks are all there is in Acro Aerial: you zoom down a ramp, waggling a joystick for speed then lift off for stunts. The screen flips right, then scrolls upwards as you do your stuff. You can also do tricks in the Snowboard Half-Pipe where you 'ski' into the screen. The lengthy curved half-pipe has logs to avoid, plus stars to collect for extra points. You can also get points by executing tricks such as leaping over bumps and doing aerials — zooming up off the side of the Half-Pipe.

▼ The Acro Aerials have some of the best graphics in the game.





This is more than a bit disappointing for an Epyx game. Most of the events are very simplistic and dull with only mediocre presentation and little sense of fun. And unfortunately there's only one simultaneous two-player event (Innertube Thrash) — more of the same would have increased the sense of competition between the players. As it is, the game still provides good variety if little quality. But all that snow's a bit depressing in the middle of summer — what a strange time to release such a wintry game!



What surprised me more than the fact that this is a rather limited package of snow events was the fact that Rob Hubbard has come up with some unimaginative music, and this after hearing the marvellous PC tunes (the Downhill Blitz is an 'off-the-wall' but particularly grating piece). I'm a little worried about the minimal presence of simultaneous play in the game — one out five events offering the two-player option is not a good sign and should have offered good scope for some wild and very funny events (the Snowball Blast shows promise and the Acro Aerials could have been fun if it had a little more depth). Instead, the limited events just come out dull. Epyx, what went wrong?

PRESENTATION 65%
Amusing instructions, multi-player games but only one simultaneous two-player event.

GRAPHICS 64%
Good variation, but the Downhill Blitz is very poor and the Innertube Thrash is dull. The other events are only okay, but you expect more of Epyx.

SOUND 72%
Unremarkable Rob Hubbard tunes.

HOOKABILITY 70%
Ability to enter any event means there's plenty to get you going...

LASTABILITY 57%
...but none of the events are really first-class and some are very poor.

OVERALL 61%
A disappointing game from the masters of sports sims.

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RESEARCH PROJECT: Binary code addiction as a means of controlling the world.
HEAD SCIENTIST: Prof NORMAN NUTZ Phd, Bsc, KP.
RESEARCH EQUIPMENT: C64, Amiga A500, Cray-2.

LAB ASSISTANT: The Geek

Not one, not five but two Sierra On-Line games reviewed this month. One — Hero's Quest — is particularly brilliant while the other — Manhunter 2 — isn't. Gosh, what a contrast! Then Mike Singleton raises his (oops, nearly said ugly then) head, blinks 'cause he's not used to the light and provides an unusual whodunnit graphic adventure in a style reminiscent of The Name Of The Rose (well, to me it was) — you know, the film where James Bond wore a frock. Plus SSI produce the goods yet again with a strategic delve into a world of Magic, Mayhem and... er, many other things beginning with M, in Sword Of Aragon. And to give my monitor-weary eyes a bit of rest I turn over a new leaf and take a look at a book.

LAB Report

STYLER

HERO'S QUEST: SO YOU WANT TO BE A HERO?

Sierra On-Line, Amiga (1Mb only) £34.99

Most adventurers dream of one day becoming a hero and drinking in the adoration and respect associated with such a title. *Hero's Quest* allows you to at least attempt to reach the dizzy heights of hero in the inimitable, 3-D animated adventure style of Sierra On-Line.

The little town of Spielburg and its surrounding valley is having a spot of bother with trolls, ogres, goblins, witches, warlocks, zombies, ghosts, dragons, lizards, minotaurs, bears, griffins thieves and brigands... and they need a hero to clean up. Having just graduated from the famous adventurers' correspondence school for heroes you feel cocky enough to take up the challenge and so head off to Spielburg seeking fame and fortune.

Before play commences, option screens are displayed through which you choose whether to help Spielburg





as a fighter, a thief or a magician. You are then shown your character's ability and skill points. You're given an extra 50 points to assign to certain skills — such as throwing, stealth or climbing — which should be used wisely: magic powers might be considered less important to a thief than the ability to pick locks. Once happy with your adventurer it's time to show the inhabitants of Spielburg what you're made of.

You enter the quiet town on the morning of day one. The sheriff and his aid are relaxing on a porch near the town gates. They are fairly amicable and thus useful for trying out the frequently required 'Ask About...' command. This input is the key to successful questing as answers given provide clues to other questions, places or people.

The sheriff tells you of the guild in the town where quests are displayed for budding heroes to undertake. They range from finding a lost ring (a good one to begin with) to rescuing the baron's missing daughter. Rewards are offered for success.

Spielburg's monetary system is a simple one consisting of Golds and Silvers, ten Silvers make one Gold. You need money for supplies — food rations for example — tools of your trade (lock picks for a thief, scrolls for a magic user and weapons for a fighter) and potions for healing, breaking enchantments or warding off enemies.

As you progress you should practise your skills frequently, the more you use them the more adept you become at them. An initially unclimbable tree outside the healer's hut is quite soon scalable with practice, and throwing the occasional rock soon results in an accurate arm for a user of daggers.

Exploring the forest around the town, you encounter many monsters which you may either try to run from (a good idea in early stages of play) or engage in battle. Fights are undertaken at a distance or close up (depending on the type of foe you face). The more you fight the better your character's skills in weapon-use or magic become. However, should you get yourself into a no-win situation you have the option to escape (sometimes).

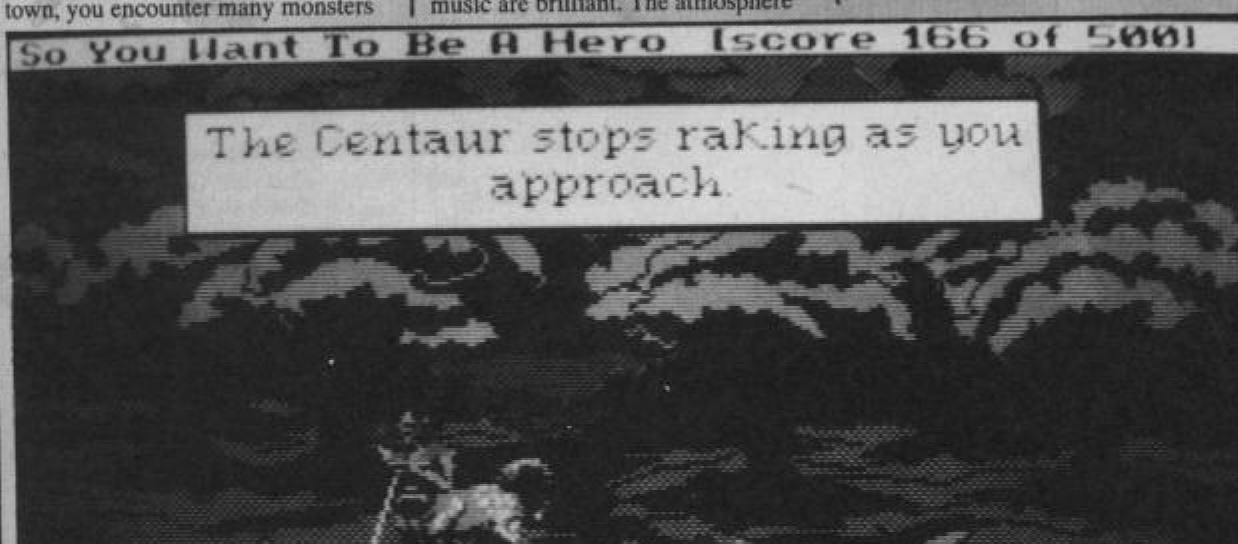
As with most Sierra games it's not all hard work, there are many amusing moments to break the tension such as when asked by the fairies to dance, your character struts his stuff Saturday-Night-Fever style. And there's an atheist's grave in the cemetery bearing the legend 'All dressed up and nowhere to go'... well it made me laugh.

All graphics are well drawn, animation is good — if a little slow in places — and sound effects and music are brilliant. The atmosphere created, especially when wandering around the forest at night (not recommended for beginners) is outstanding. The only drawback with *Hero's Quest* (as with all Sierra animated adventures) is the amount of disk access/swapping involved. But, as always, the good points render these niggles almost unnoticeable.

Hero's Quest II: Trial By Fire is soon to be released and the character you create in the first game can be loaded into the sequel giving you a slight advantage over a cold start.

Hero's Quest may be pricey but you can play using three different characters and the game is tougher than most recent Sierra titles, so it's certainly worth forking out for. A marvellous romp through a wonderous land of sword and sorcery.





ATMOSPHERE	93%
PUZZLE FACTOR	89%
INTERACTION	88%
LASTABILITY	90%
OVERALL	91%

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SWORD OF ARAGON

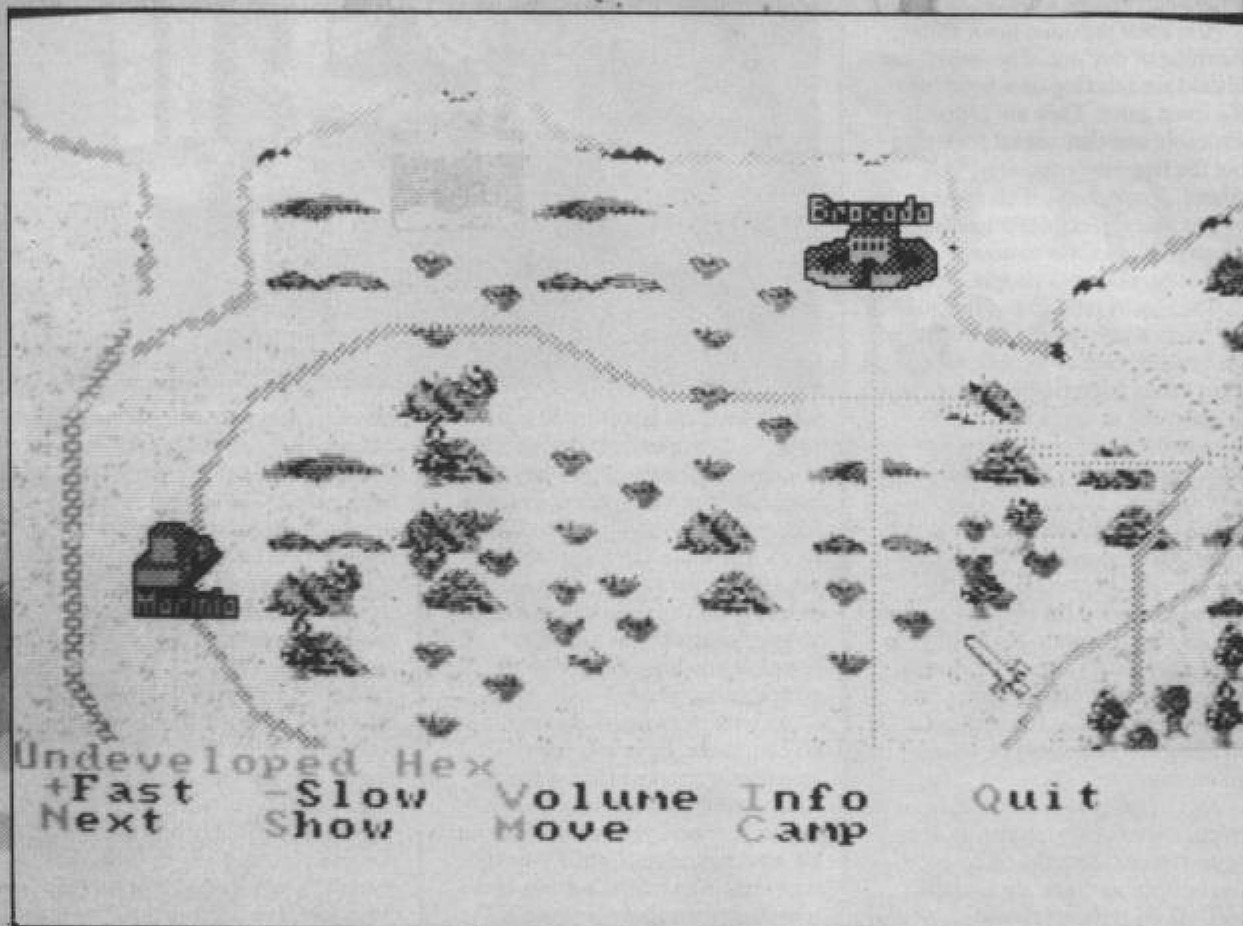
SSI/US Gold, Amiga £29.99

Dad's popped his clogs! He was the Duke of Aladda and his will dictates that you are to extend his dominion and eventually sit on the emperor's throne in the city of Tetrada. Easy for him to say, he's six foot under.

Anyway, 'cause your dad's will is law — even though he's pushing up daisies — you have to obey. This means raising and equipping an army so you may venture forth to wipe the floor with fearsome foes who are even now threatening Aladda and its surroundings.

Play takes place on two levels: the first leans more toward the economic and political than physical, and involves your control of factors concerned with governing a peasant populace, ie tax collecting and fixing wages for soldiers. The second level is where you put your armies through their paces defending your lands and attempting to conquer new ones.

Your first move is to select a class for your character from a selection including knights, rangers, warriors and mages. Once chosen, data on your character is shown detailing weapons, armour, leadership abilities and combat prowess.





You then either select Standard Unit Setup (computer generated) for your army or build it from scratch — the former is recommended for inexperienced players. Army units vary, dependent on the class of character you've chosen to play and include cavalry, bowmen, infantry and so on.

The game begins with you in the relative safety of Aladda where you can survey your armies, city and income. From here you use funds raised from looting, rewards or taxes to train or equip armies. Or you can invest in your city's growth by pumping money into agriculture, mining, lumber and defence.

Once happy with the economic side of your hopefully ever-growing empire you set out to undertake quests or overthrow unfriendly cities. In fact your first (unavoidable) task is to vanquish the orc army that killed your father — thankfully this is relatively simple to accomplish and also quite rewarding.

Combat is fairly extensive with differing types of battle situations. Once you've selected the units you wish to be involved in a particular battle, you're given move options such as Supply (load missile weapons, prepare spells and so on),

Attack, Cast, Force or Entrench. You may also select an automatic-move option which gives your computer control of the move.

Although combat takes place in realtime, results of your non-conflict decisions are only seen once you advance time one month. This feature also provides information on happenings throughout the rest of the realm — it's also at this stage that quests are made known to you.

Success breeds success and the better you are at taking over the kingdom the more people will be drawn to you to add to your forces.

Sound in *Sword Of Aragon* is odd and the theme music is particularly naff but, taking into account the strategic bent of the game, graphics are certainly adequate. There is, however, a lot to do in the game, and becoming emperor is not going to be easy even for skilled strategists. But it's not just a case of attacking and overthrowing enemy cities — much of the kingdom is unexplored. Danger and magic reside in these areas, testing your leadership abilities to the full should you venture there.

Sword Of Aragon is a good game, which is quite exciting in places. The running of cities combined with combat, and the opportunity to undertake quests, gives the game much depth. It should keep you playing for weeks!

ATMOSPHERE	**81%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**N/A**
INTERACTION	**79%**
LASTABILITY	**84%**
OVERALL	**82%**

GRIMBLOOD

Mastertronic, Amiga £4.99

Say the name Mike Singleton and what instantly springs to mind? Well, in my case it was nothing (what's new?) but to many people the name is synonymous with a strategy/adventure game called *The Lords Of Midnight*: an innovative and highly successful game that's still remembered by many with a sense of awe. And more recently there was the epic arcade/strategy game *Midwinter*. In fact, innovation seems to be Singleton's forte as *Grimblood* is definitely not of your run-of-the-mill game design.

There you are minding your own business, wondering how you were going to fill another day amid the cold corridors of Castle Grimblood when a scream echoes through the hallways. Someone's been murdered and it's your job to find the killer before he strikes again. Cue music.

Grimblood opens by showing you its Castle Screen — through which the Interrogation and Exploration screens are accessed — clicking on castle windows identifies the rooms behind them and gives you the option to travel there. While travelling to a chosen location you may stop at any time to explore other areas along the way or to interrogate anyone you meet.

The main graphic window alters to suit your current activity: a portrait of the person you're questioning, a picture of the room you're currently in and so on.

Function keys are assigned to particular questions you may ask of people, instructions you may give and accusations you can make — but don't go accusing someone of the murders unless you have positive proof of their guilt: they soon become unfriendly. You can also assign people to go to particular locations to observe happenings and report back to you. Not everybody will cooperate though.

Objects found can be examined and adjacent rooms described with the pointing of the cursor and click of the mouse. Secret passages abound, making it easy to get lost if you don't keep track of your whereabouts.

To win you need to accuse the right person of the murders — and with characters such as Ironbrain and Lockjaw to deal with your choice of suspects is vast. He/she will confess eventually but don't forget to get a witness. Neither should you dawdle as the murderer will carry on with his/her devilish doings until everyone is dead. And while the murders will whittle down the number of suspects, you never know when you'll be the next victim.

Dave Whittaker (another famous name) created the music in *Grimblood*, but while it's fairly effective it's also quite repetitive. Sound effects are OK but the speech (thankfully accompanied by text) is not very good.

Gameplay alters each time you play *Grimblood* in that different people get murdered with different weapons and the guilty party is never the same guy/girl twice (well, not very often). While there's not a lot to get excited about in *Grimblood*, it will make you think and it's an interesting concept which is good value for money.

ATMOSPHERE	**70%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**68%**
INTERACTION	**64%**
LASTABILITY	**70%**
OVERALL	**71%**

MANHUNTER 2: SAN FRANCISCO

Sierra On-Line, Amiga (1Mb only) £29.99

The Orbs have landed and there's to fear but sphere itself (groan! — Ed). After first overrunning New York they've now turned their evil intentions on San Francisco, spreading horror, tyranny and death as they go.

In the first game you were enslaved by the Orbs and used as a Manhunter to track down humans resistant to their authoritarian rule. But you eventually regained your senses and are plotting against your one-time masters. As the game begins you're in hot pursuit of a ruthless killer as he attempts to escape in an alien craft. You follow as best you can in a similar machine but inexperience at flying such a ship results in your crash-landing in San Francisco.

Luckily your ship has a relatively soft landing atop another Manhunter! He turns out to be one Peter Brown whose corpse thoughtfully provides you with a personal computer. This enables you to track down suspected Orb enemies and glean info from them. Your aim in this sequel is to feign being a loyal Manhunter in fact trying to find the killer who led you here. You also might want to discover what the Orbs are doing in San Francisco.

Control of your character is via keyboard, mouse or joystick. Moving the cursor around screens reveals options such as Take, Enter, Move and Examine. But tracking people via your personal computer is the nub of the game: once an area of the city has been revealed to you through tracking a suspect you're free to visit it and take a closer look. People who interact with your trackee may themselves be tracked to help you discover more about the city and the Orb's intentions. Track everybody you can or you may miss a vital clue!

Arcade sequences abound (as in the prequel) and are abominably slow and boring to play even though you have the choice of easy, normal or hard level at which to attempt them. At one point you come across an old warehouse which you have to enter and traverse in order to reach the office at the far end. Viewed from above, your blocky character uses crates to obscure himself from the sensors of patrolling robots as he slowly jerks his way across the screen. Interludes such as this destroy any atmosphere created by the more adventure-orientated sequences of the game and, for me, serve no purpose but to frustrate: if I wanted to waggle a joystick I'd buy *Hammerfist*.

Both music and graphics are basic compared to the likes of *Hero's Quest*, *Space Quest III* or *Leisure Suit Larry III*. And there has been no attempt to improve on the IBM-PC



version of this game — released last year — thus it looks and sounds dated.

If you have a lot of patience and enjoyed the first *Manhunter* game you may warm to this follow up, otherwise have a look at it (if your friendly neighbourhood computer store will let you) before you invest. Even though you have to wear a brown robe to be a Manhunter, the game isn't exactly habit forming.

ATMOSPHERE	**58%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**61%**
INTERACTION	**55%**
LASTABILITY	**54%**
OVERALL	**57%**

COMPUTER ADVENTURES — THE SECRET ART

Amazon Systems, £7.95

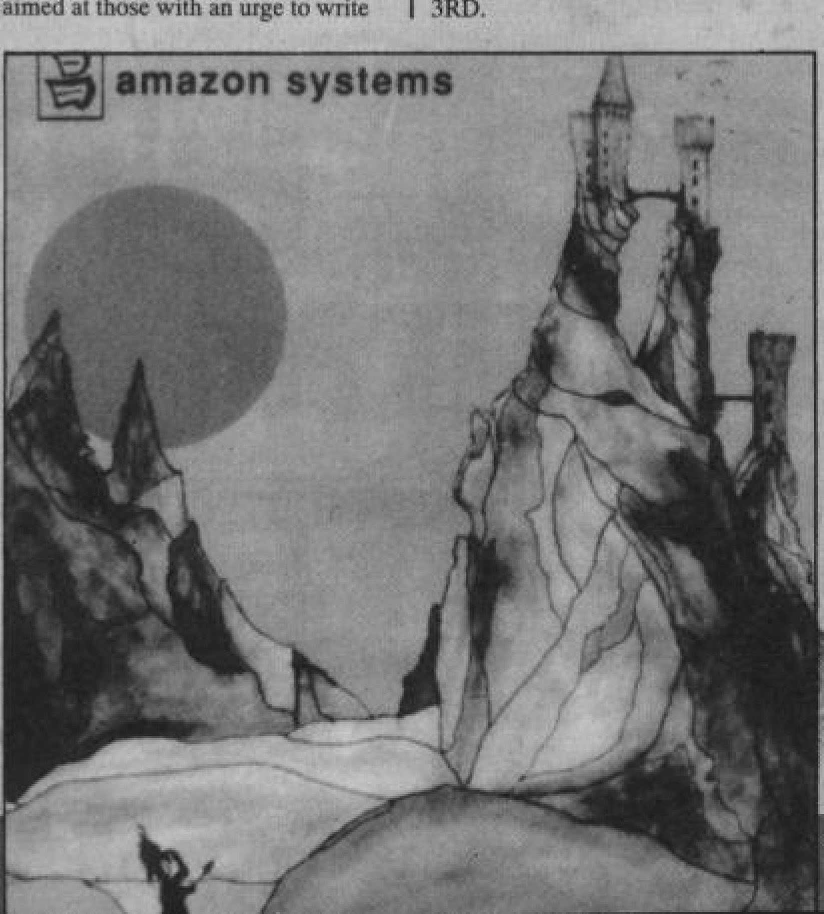
Getting little blisters on your pinkies from all the typing and clicking involved in rescuing yet another princess? Eyes mimicking the shape of your computer screen? Then give your delicate body a rest from the strains of computer interaction and power down for a few hours to curl up in front of the cat with a good book.

Author Gil Williamson has managed to stop developing software just long enough to write about his favourite subject: adventures. The publication — although claimed as a must for all adventurers — is chiefly aimed at those with an urge to write their own games.

From presentation through plot ideas to how to publish and copy-protect your game, *Computer Adventures* rolls along quite nicely providing interesting info on a myriad of adventure-related subjects and, although it sometimes states the obvious, it should make a good read even for those who wish to remain players rather than creators.

The one negative aspect to this overall absorbing and illuminating book is the price: eight quid for a paperback?

Computer Adventures is available from Sherratt & Hughes, Dillons, University Bookshops and a few WH Smith outlets or via mail order from Amazon Systems, Merlewood, Lodge Hill Road, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 3RD.



SCIENTIFIC SUGGESTIONS WITH THE GEEK!

LEISURE SUIT LARRY III TIPS

If you can resist looking through the binoculars at the start of the game go straight to your home (the way is well signposted), discover what you wife has to say then go east twice for a quick change.

Return west and pick up the wood then go back to your ex-mansion and open the mailbox. Take the card. Go east to the fountain by the casino and follow the pointing finger to your place of work.

After you've been thrown out, go back to the fountain and head south to the beach. Look at the girl then talk to her and give her your credit card.

Go to the casino steps and sharpen your knife on them. Go west into the jungle, walk half-way up the screen and go east to Chip 'N' Dale's strip joint. Cut the grass with your knife and make a skirt from it.

Go back to the casino and walk east, behind the steps, to the cabana. Enter the left-hand cubicle and wear the skirt. Take the soap-on-a-rope from the sink to the left of the cabana. Carve the wood you picked up in the jungle and go back to the beach.

After selling the girl your souvenir return to the cabana and get changed. Go back to the beach and pick up the towel. THROW TOWEL to do a spot of sunbathing but don't linger too long.

Enter the casino and walk through the lobby, up the stairs and turn left. Talk to the Maitre D'. Show him your pass, tell him the pass number and give him twenty bucks. When you come out of the show look at the girl when she comes out of the dressing room and talk to her. Give her land. Now go and find the solicitor's.

SPACE QUEST III TIPS

Go south ther ast to the bucket conveyor. Stand on it, wait, 'till you're on the belt above and (quickly) Stand then Jump. Walk carefully west to the grabber and get in it — don't hang about or the robot takes a pot shot at you. Now drive the grabber to the back of the screen then right to the next screen. Travel to the right of this screen and press the button to lower the claw. When the claw brings the motivator up, drive as far right as you can and come to the front of the screen. From the right-hand side of this screen, lower the motivator into the ship below. Take the grabber back where you found it and climb on to the chute (again, don't hang about) and walk into it.

Walk to the left of the debris-filled hollow and look in the hole to find a reactor; take it. Climb out via the ladder.

Walk north and east to inside the space tanker. Take the wires and continue through until you get mugged. To retrieve what the rat nicked, return to the chute. Walk into it and check out the hole again. Take all you find (reactor and wire). This time when you leave the hollow take the ladder with you. Go back to the space tanker where you were mugged and continue east to the Battlebot's head. Climb through the eye socket.

Walk to the left of the nearest of the ship's engines and use the ladder to climb on. Open the hatch. When in the ship, use reactor then use wire to get the craft in ship shape. Sit and look at the computer screen in the cockpit. Click on Engine, Radar and Takeoff. When your ascent is halted click on Weapon System, Front Shields and then Fire. You're now out of the junk freighter. Look at the screen and click on Navigation System. Select Planet Phleebhut, Select A Course and choose Light Speed.

Land on Phleebhut. Stand up and press the red button to open the ramp and leave the ship. Go north a couple of screens then west to the World O' Wonders. Go inside and sell your glowing gem to Fester Blatz; hold out for 425 buckazoids. Buy some ThermoWeave Underwear and leave the store.

After being threatened by the Terminator don't go back to your ship but head west to the door in the metal beast's foot. Enter and use the lift. Climb the steps to the second level platform and walk over to the lower of the two rope pulleys. Wait until the Terminator arrives and gets close to the grinding gears then push the pulley. Go to his remains and pick up the invisibility belt. Return to your ship and take off.

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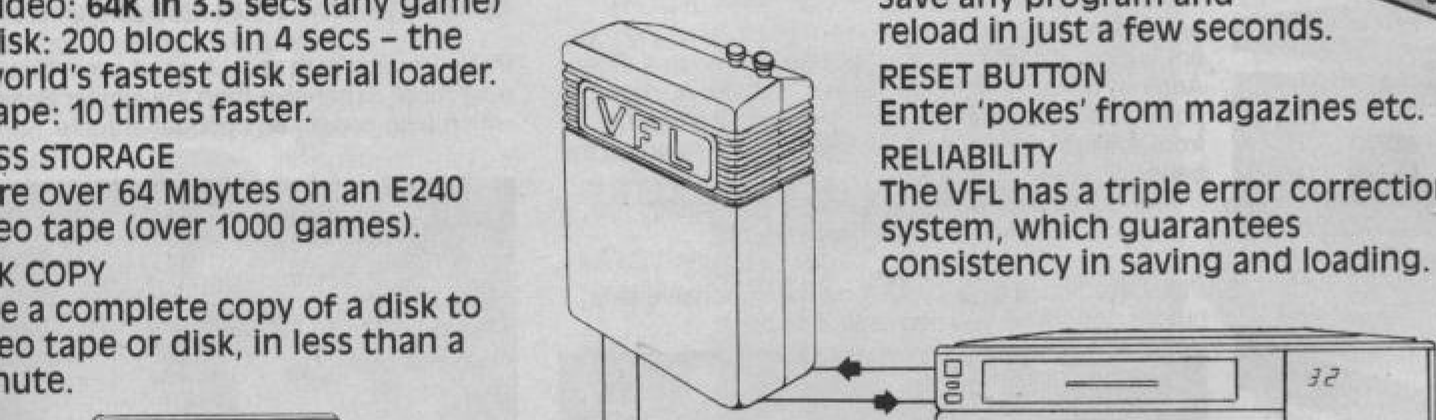
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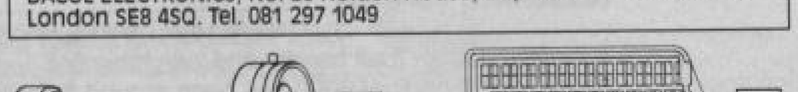
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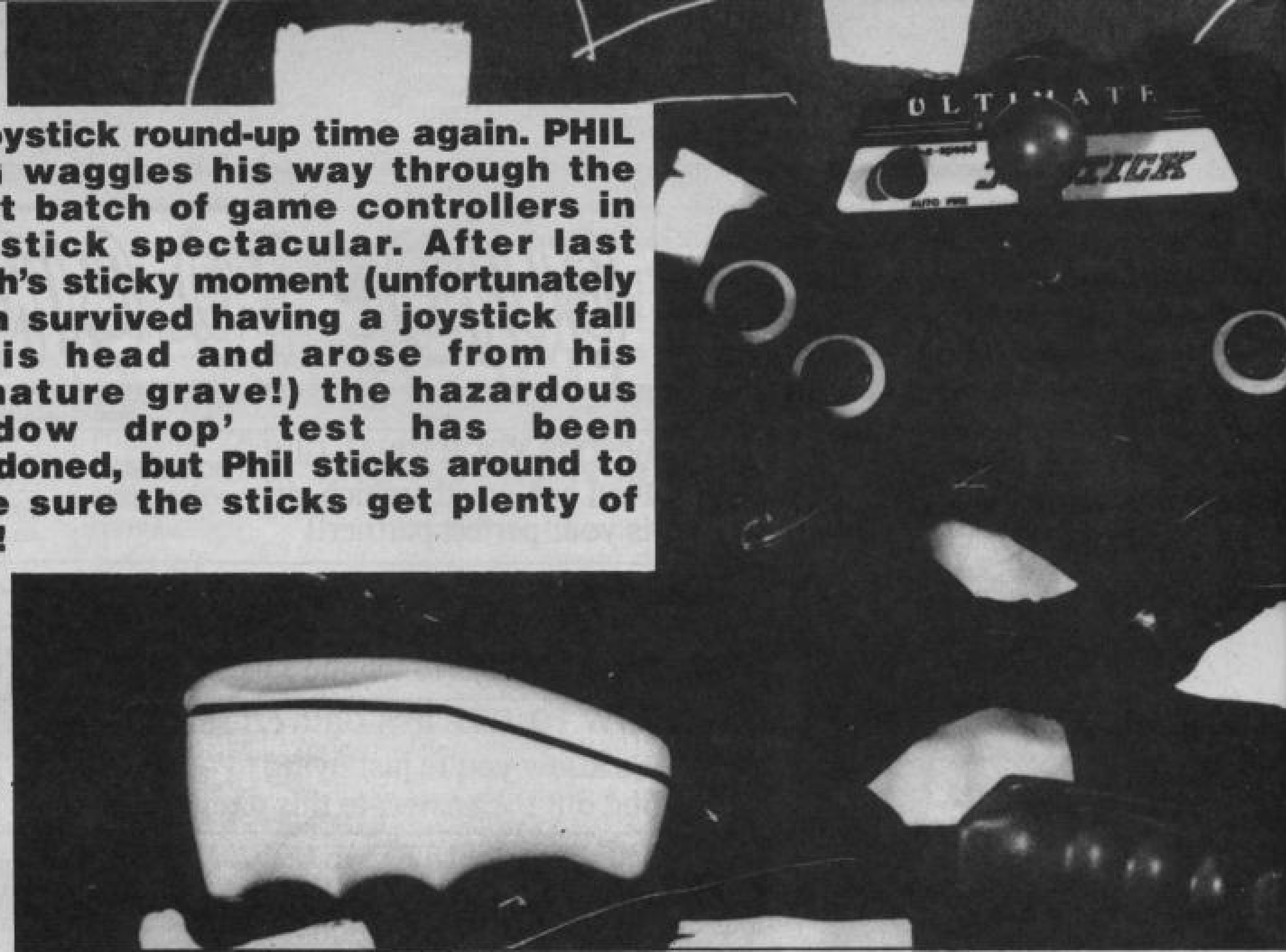


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STICK 'EM UP! Again!

It's joystick round-up time again. PHIL KING waggles his way through the latest batch of game controllers in this stick spectacular. After last month's sticky moment (unfortunately Robin survived having a joystick fall on his head and arose from his premature grave!) the hazardous 'window drop' test has been abandoned, but Phil sticks around to make sure the sticks get plenty of stick!



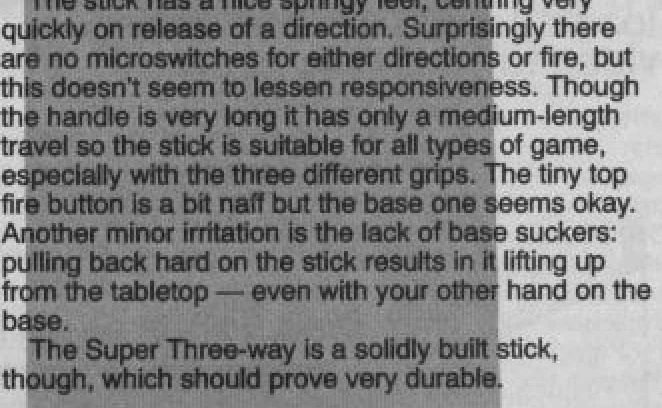
WICO SUPER THREE-WAY
(Suncom, £24.99)

This adaptable stick comes with three handles: a red ball, a thin 'bat handle' and moulded pistol grip. These simply slide onto the long steel shaft, each having a hole at the top to accommodate the small top fire button. There are also two interchangeable gatelock rings which fit around the bottom of the shaft for 8-way or 4-way directional control (the latter designed for games requiring no diagonals, such as *Pipe Mania*). Another larger fire button is located on the square base along with a small switch to disable it.

The stick has a nice springy feel, centring very quickly on release of a direction. Surprisingly there are no microswitches for either directions or fire, but this doesn't seem to lessen responsiveness. Though the handle is very long it has only a medium-length travel so the stick is suitable for all types of game, especially with the three different grips. The tiny top fire button is a bit naff but the base one seems okay. Another minor irritation is the lack of base suckers: pulling back hard on the stick results in it lifting up from the tabletop — even with your other hand on the base.

The Super Three-way is a solidly built stick, though, which should prove very durable.

Phil's Verdict: ■ ■ ■ — A bit on the expensive side, but it's got a nice feel and is built to last.



Three-Way

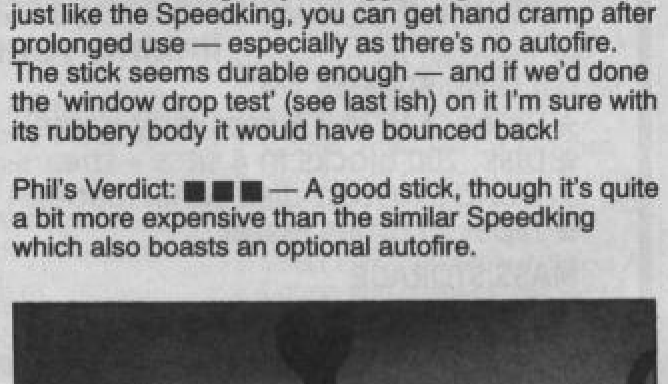
WICO ERGOSTICK
(Suncom, £18.99)

This 'unique, ergonomically advanced design' looks remarkably like the Konix Speedking. But the white moulded body is made out of a weird rubbery material which feels like the 'dead flesh' of an old Speccy keyboard!

It fits in the hand fairly well, though, and the directions and fire button are microswitched for good responsiveness. With the short handle (and shortish travel) quick changes of direction are easy to make, so it's good for *Kick Off* — even Stu managed to beat me by using it! The microswitches seem quieter than usual giving a hardly audible click, but the small hole around the bottom of the steel shaft stops movement with a nice 'clunk' sound.

Although smaller, the fire button is much more responsive than the Speedking's rather cumbersome one and less tiring on your trigger finger. Even so, just like the Speedking, you can get hand cramp after prolonged use — especially as there's no autofire. The stick seems durable enough — and if we'd done the 'window drop test' (see last ish) on it I'm sure with its rubbery body it would have bounced back!

Phil's Verdict: ■ ■ ■ — A good stick, though it's quite a bit more expensive than the similar Speedking which also boasts an optional autofire.



Ergostick

PROFESSIONAL 9000 DELUXE
(Euromax, £24.95)

A classic design (ball handle and twin base fire buttons), the original 9000 has been around for eight years (see 'Best Of The Rest'). The Deluxe replaces its predecessor's ball-type handle with a slightly



longer one with a top fire button. The main addition, though, is that of rapid-fire: this works when any fire button is held down — the rate of fire is adjusted by rotating one of the base buttons. A switch under the base selects either top or base buttons. Four suction cups secure the stick to a tabletop.

Like the Dynamics Pro sticks which it resembles the 9000 Deluxe has responsive, microswitched directional control but the soggy leaf-switch fire buttons let it down a bit. The short-travel stick has a nice springy feel and it's easy to obtain accurate directions.

The adjustable rapid-fire is a good idea, though, allowing you to get a solid stream of fire on most games. And thankfully it can also be turned off for games where you need to keep fire held down (*R-type*, *TV Sports Football*, *Kick Off* etc).
Apart from the flimsy fire buttons the stick is very solidly built with microswitches which are guaranteed for two years and a strong steel shaft.

Phil's Verdict: ■■■■ — The rapid-fire's great, the microswitched, short travel handle's great. If only Euromax would microswitch the fire buttons this would be a stick to rival the classic Cruiser.



9000 Deluxe

ULTIMATE RAPIDFIRE
(Euromax, £22.95)

This is another of those 'mega-sticks' with a huge base, housing four fire buttons (and LEDs which light when fire is pressed) and a short ball-type handle. The rapid-fire rate can be adjusted (or turned off) by turning a small knob on the base. Suction cups secure the base to a tabletop, although being so large it can be held on your lap without any loss of stability.

The short handle is very springy with a short travel so quick changes in direction are easily made. The microswitched directions are accurately obtained. The fire buttons, although leaf-switch, seem springier than the ones on the other Euromax sticks and have a slightly convex (rather than concave) shape which I prefer. The 'dial-a-speed' rapid-fire gives a good stream of fire, the LEDs flashing to indicate the rate of fire.

Phil's Verdict: ■■■■■ — I really like this one. Well designed and solidly built it's definitely the best of the big mega-sticks.

TURBO PEDAL
(Euromax, £24.95)

Not really a joystick this one, but a pair of pedals! Designed mainly for driving games (and flight sims!) the pedals control up/down movement (ie acceleration and braking). Of course this would be be pretty useless (hard to go round corners!) without other directions and fire, so the latter are accessed by plugging any joystick into the Turbo Pedal's own joystick port (the Pedal's lead in turn being plugged into the computer).

The red pedals are large enough for most feet but personally I found them a bit uncomfortable to use, as unlike real car pedals you can't rest your feet on them without pushing them down and going out of control!

As for how useful they are, they really only work on driving games (I did try playing *Kick Off*, but it wasn't a good idea!): on these they're very responsive, making driving far more realistic and fun.

Phil's Verdict: ■■ — A bit expensive, and limited in its use, but if you're a fan of driving games the Turbo Pedal is a fun device.

BEST OF THE REST

PROFESSIONAL 9000
(Euromax, £14.95)

■■■ — Predecessor to Pro 9000 Deluxe with a ball-type handle and no top fire button or rapid fire. Like it's successor it's solidly built with a springy, short-travel handle and very responsive microswitched directions. Again, the soggy leaf-switch fire buttons let it down slightly.

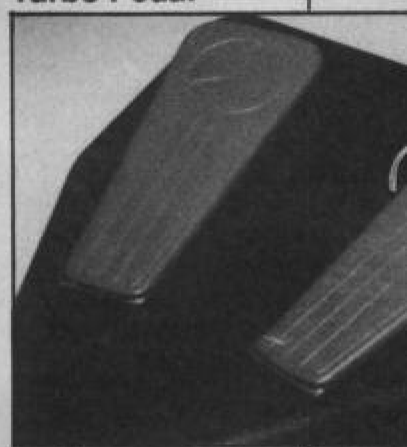
THE ARCADE
(Euromax, £17.95 Standard, £19.95 Turbo)

■■■■ — Euromax claim this has been Europe's leading selling joystick for nine years. Apart from the triangular base it resembles and performs identically to the Pro 9000. Very comfortable to hold, it's very responsive with the microswitched, short-travel handle. Again, the single leaf-switch fire button is a bit soggy. The Turbo version comes with autofire and a Pro 9000 type handle with a fire button on top.
All the joysticks have a one year guarantee.

Rapidfire



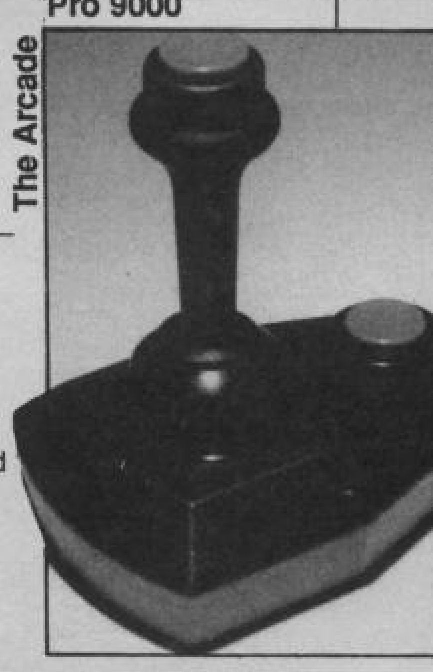
Turbo Pedal



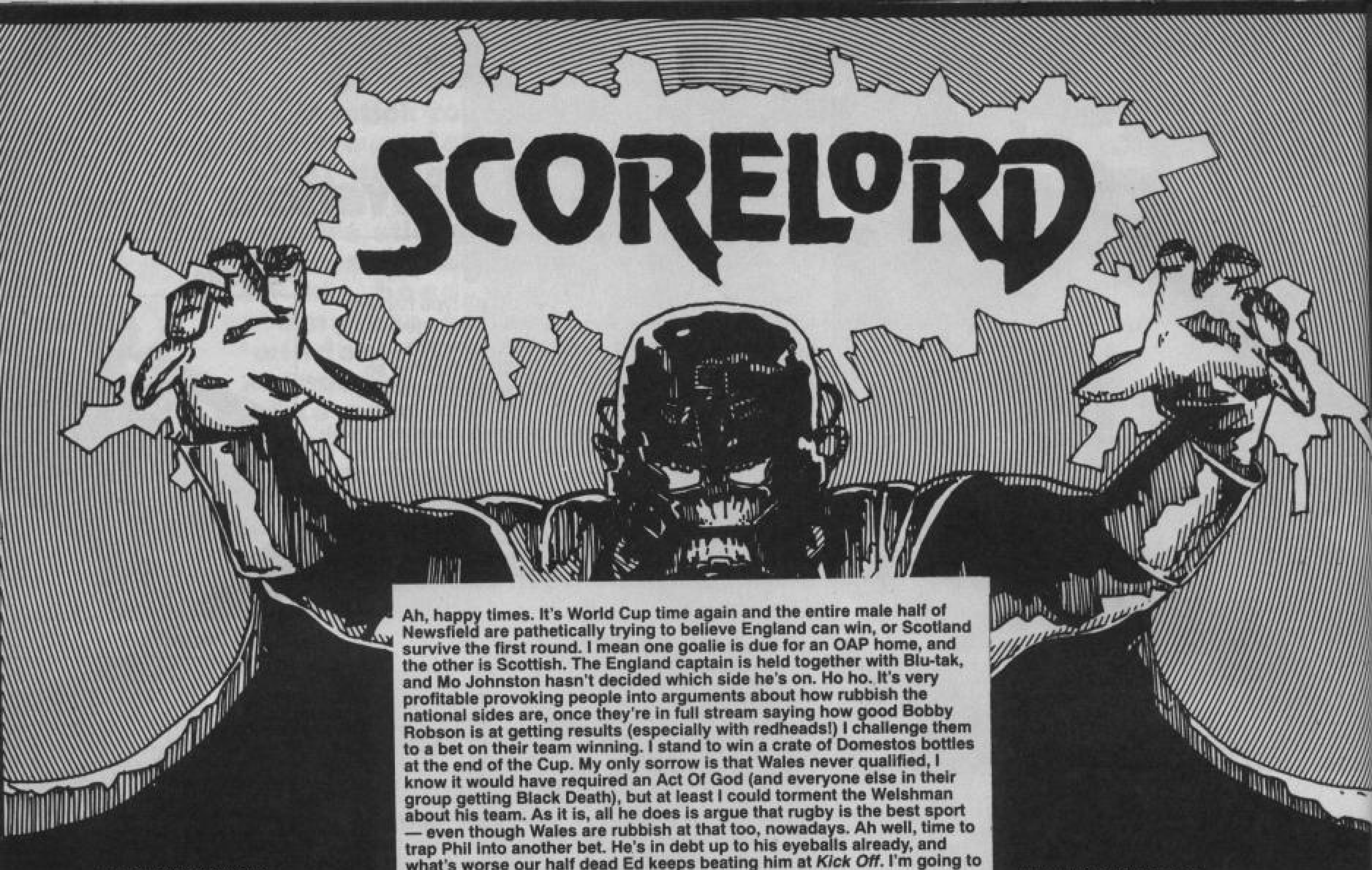
part 2



Pro 9000



The Arcade



Ah, happy times. It's World Cup time again and the entire male half of Newsfield are pathetically trying to believe England can win, or Scotland survive the first round. I mean one goalie is due for an OAP home, and the other is Scottish. The England captain is held together with Blu-tak, and Mo Johnston hasn't decided which side he's on. Ho ho. It's very profitable provoking people into arguments about how rubbish the national sides are, once they're in full stream saying how good Bobby Robson is at getting results (especially with redheads!) I challenge them to a bet on their team winning. I stand to win a crate of Domestos bottles at the end of the Cup. My only sorrow is that Wales never qualified, I know it would have required an Act Of God (and everyone else in their group getting Black Death), but at least I could torment the Welshman about his team. As it is, all he does is argue that rugby is the best sport — even though Wales are rubbish at that too, nowadays. Ah well, time to trap Phil into another bet. He's in debt up to his eyeballs already, and what's worse our half dead Ed keeps beating him at *Kick Off*. I'm going to be rich!

4TH DIMENSION (Hewson)

Cyberdyne Warrior
32,120 Alex Duke, Hemel Hempstead, Herts
26,695 Darryll Gould, Horsell, Surrey
24,265 Scott Wooldridge, Cheltenham, Glos

Head The Ball
33,660 Rob H, Stalag ZZAP!
32,990 Scott Wooldridge, Cheltenham, Glos
32,290 Alex Duke, Hemel Hempstead, Herts

Mission Impossibubble
82,500 Stuart Wynne, Home For Sick Eds
73,500 Alex Duke, Hemel Hempstead, Herts
57,000 Rob H, Stalag ZZAP!

Insects In Space
224,490 Rob H, Stalag ZZAP!
46,590 Marcos Moret, Whetstone, London
34,730 Stuart Wynne, Home For Sick Eds

ALIEN SYNDROME (Ace)
362,500 Bret 'Cool' Crossley, Rothwell, Leeds
259,500 Martin Lindsay, Geraldton, Australia
223,610 D Emmins, Stratford, London E15

APB (Tengen/Domark)
75,890 (Day 18) Len Logg, Warley, W Mids
56,570 (Day 16) John 'G.O.D.' Canter, Welwyn Garden City

(Amiga)
92,450 (Day 20) Ian 'Stoat' Perryman, Plymouth Devon
76,540 (Day 17) Steven Packer, Chelmsford, Essex
72,505 (Day 12) Richard Fowler, Biggin Hill, Kent

ARMALYTE (Thalamus)
60,927,900 Rob Ellis, Transmission Software
59,672,200 Col & Grinny, Rochdale, Lancs
35,477,900 Andrew Rawley, Billericay, Essex

BARBARIAN II (Palace)
671,006 Greg Macdonald, Glasgow
575,000 Lee Tanner, Basildon, Essex
486,790 (Completed) Simon Phillips, Greenfield, Beds

BATMAN: THE MOVIE (Ocean)
1,580,120 Karl Green, Acklam, Cleveland
1,479,500 Paul Berry 'the cool dude', Rochdale
1,478,700 Marcos 'The Muke' Simpson, Northwood, Middx

(Amiga)
769,400 Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
624,342 Ian Perryman, Plymouth, Devon
615,570 (Completed) Craig and Jason

BATTLE SQUADRON (Electronic Zoo) (Amiga)
2,645,645 Ian 'Stoat' Perryman, Plymouth, Devon
2,440,600 Lucifer, Deal, Kent
2,235,075 Liam Asher, Belper, Derbys

BLOOD MONEY (Psygnosis)
127,450 Rob H, Stalag ZZAP!

(Amiga)
351,150 Ian Perryman, Plymouth, Devon
349,680 Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
340,000 (Completed — Again!) C Hall, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear

BUBBLE BOBBLE (Firebird)
12,312,260 Simon Phillips, Greenfield, Beds
9,390,340 James Chan, Walton, Liverpool
9,384,260 Ian Moglan, Somewhere

CABAL (Ocean)
208,615 (Completed) Chris Campbell, Nottingham
166,720 'Mad Man Mark' Ashton, Manchester
150,491 (Completed) Ronald 'Radical' Pettit, Banstead, Surrey

CASTLE MASTER (Incentive/Domark)
8,367,500 (Completed) Graham Cole, Tadley, Hants
8,201,250 (Completed) Kev 'Magister' Bowley, Barnsley, S Yorks

CHASE HQ (Ocean)
18,860,520 (Completed) Michael 'Ens' Nicol, East Kilbride, Scotland
15,195,819 (Completed) Michael Bather, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside
11,091,969 (Completed) Brian Leahy, Co Cork, Ireland

(Amiga)
9,999,999 (Completed) Martin 'The Mittin' Calladine, Reading
7,498,980 Glenn Paterson, Plymouth, Devon
7,240,560 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading

CRACKDOWN (US Gold)
601,350 Matthew 'Nole' Allen, West Ewell, Surrey

E-MOTION (US Gold) (Amiga)
Completed (156,400) Steve Packer, Chelmsford, Essex
Completed (140,250) Rob Sadler, Halesowen, W Mids
Level 37 (127,650) Lucifer, Deal, Kent

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS (US Gold)
4,364,900 Nathan Rees, Cyncoed, Cardiff
4,171,800 (Completed) Simon Hudson, Hillingdon, Middx
4,125,100 (Completed) Rab Paul, East Kilbride, Scotland

HARD DRIVIN' (Tengen/Domark) (Amiga)
70,576 (Time — 1:37.99) Andrew Rowley, Billericay, Essex
41,445 (1:49.58) Stu Lindsell, Brentwood, Essex
30,280 (2:08) Rob H, Stalag ZZAP!

INTERNATIONAL KARATE + (System 3)
588,000 Ste Markey, Bootle, Merseyside
565,100 Martin Smith, Ashbrooke, Sunderland
543,300 John Farrow, Barrowford, Lancs

(Amiga)
183,100 John de Vugt, Roosendaal, Holland
124,500 John Farrow, Barrowford, Lancs

IVANHOE
63,015 Stuart Wynne, Home For Sick Eds

JUMPING JACKSON (Infogrames) (Amiga)
28,750 Steve Packer, Chelmsford, Essex

KLAX (Tengen/Domark) (Amiga)
1,069,225 Phil King
397,100 Stuart Wynne, Home For Sick Eds
288,800 Rob H, Stalag ZZAP!

MYTH (System 3)
79,451 Peter Hills, Gravesend, Kent
59,126 (Completed) Graeme 'Tensed-up' Fairchild, Brentwood, Essex
53,000 (Completed) Paul Cranner, Millfield, Sunderland

NINJA WARRIORS (Virgin)
204,880 (Completed)Marcos 'The Muke' Simpson, Northwood, Middx
203,540 (Completed) Edward Fletcher, Ashton-Under-Lyme, Manchester
177,320 Luke Povey, Wandsworth, London

(Amiga)
144,430 Ian Perryman, Plymouth, Devon
143,050 Jimmy Gustafsson, Sweden
120,600 Marcos 'The Muke' Simpson, Northwood, Middx

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Amiga)
4,095,120 (Completed) Alan Mitchell, Radcliffe, Manchester
2,856,800 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading
2,798,300 Glenn Paterson, Plymouth, Devon

P-47 FREEDOM FIGHTER (Firebird) (Amiga)
1,328,000 Steven Delory, Hailsham, E Sussex
799,800 Peter 'Yeager' Andersen, Denmark
242,764 Phil King, Stalag ZZAP!

PIPE MANIA (Empire)
2,270,850 (Level '108') Mike '26 Crossovers' Vine, Dagenham, Essex
86,070 (Level 22) Thomas Matthews, Eastbourne

(Amiga)
154,300 Rob Sadler, Halesowen, W Mids
109,000 Jimmy Gustafsson, Sweden

POWER DRIFT (Activision)
902,340 P Ano, Douglas, Isle Of Man
884,960 Phil Halliwell, Shotton Colliery, Co Durham
884,640 Ian 'Tiger' Gough, Gorseinon, Swansea (Hello once again from Penllergaer resident, Rob H!)

(Amiga)
1,972,382 'Andy's Mum', Seaford, Essex
1,969,393 Steve 'St Ivel' Gee, Wakefield, W Yorks
1,943,628 Philip Sutcliffe, Nottingham

RAINBOW ISLANDS
3,659,380 Gary Thom, Eastcote, Middx
1,905,140 Brendan 'Wiz' Wyse, Allenwood North, Co Kildare, Eire
1,836,900 Kev Branch, Bromborough, Wirral, Merseyside

(Amiga)
4,799,600 Simon Jacobs, Anonyville
3,335,180 Simon Clark, Watford, Herts
2,993,980 Stuart Wynne, Home For Sick Eds

RETROGRADE (Thalamus)
1,574,315 (Completed) Gary Thom, Eastcote, Middx
1,558,730 (Completed) Dave Pawson, Crayford, Kent
1,448,475 (Completed) Wouter Oxhuysen, Holland

RICK DANGEROUS (Firebird)
317,400 (Completed) Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
311,190 Simon Phillips, Greenfield, Beds
257,300 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading

(Amiga)
744,550 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading
564,250 Ian 'Stoat' Perryman, Plymouth, Devon
14,000 Daniel Besser, Bletchley, Bucks

R-TYPE (Electric Dreams) (Amiga)
305,000 (Completed) Lee Ellershaw, Blackpool, Lancs
259,900 (Completed) Andrew Rowley, Billericay, Essex
255,700 Pintel Tomer, Ramat-Gan, Israel

SILKWORM (Virgin)
1,664,200 Stephen 'Blaster' Blidgeon, Newall Green, Manchester
1,658,200 Geoff Holgate, Dalton, Australia
1,348,400 P Ano, Douglas, Isle Of Man

(Amiga)
2,543,000 Andrew Maunder, Marple, Cheshire
2,041,300 (Completed) Steve 'Rad' Adkins, Münster, W Germany
1,138,200 Neil Head, Stourbridge, W Mids

STRIDER (Capcom)
23,500 (Completed) John Tyrrell, Drogheda, Eire
11,850 James Jack, Grypskerk, Holland

(Amiga)
1,077,500 Rafe Ball, Acton, London
724,900 (Completed) 'Spike', Shelley, W Yorks
307,000 (Completed) Daniel Purbrick, Bodmin, Cornwall

TEST DRIVE 2 (Accolade)
367,800 (Completed) Mark van Geijtenbeek, Leersum, Holland
289,700 (Completed) Mike Vine, Dagenham, Essex
135,993 (Completed) Shane Elliott, Elizabeth East, South Australia

(Amiga)
392,432 (Completed) Matt Heaton, Berkhamsted, Herts
327,296 (Completed) Sami Jussila, Jyvaskyla, Finland
304,900 (Completed) Stuart (F40) Jehan, Guernsey

TURBO OUT RUN (US Gold)
28,750,000 Graham Pert, Clackmannan, Scotland
20,675,640 Paul Cranner, Millfield, Sunderland
19,775,970 James Mason, Eaton Socon, Cambs

(Amiga)
48,669,257 Steven Bates, Askett, Bucks
35,754,346 Glenn Paterson, Plymouth, Devon
33,630,273 Ian 'Stoat' Perryman, Plymouth, Devon

THE UNTOUCHABLES (Ocean)
206,310 Marcos 'The Muke' Simpson, Northwood, Middx
205,775 Steve Mundy, Askern, Doncaster
201,680 Paul Girdlestone, Upperthong, W Yorks

VENDETTA (System 3)
30:27 (time left) Jonathan Davis, Buckhurst Hill, Essex
29:45 (time left) Rob H, Stalag ZZAP!

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ZZAP! COMP





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Of course, the game is so addictive you may well forget how long you've been playing it and lose all track of time. So the prizes for this competition will make sure you always know what time of day it is. Trendy Swatch watches will go to the first ten entries pulled out of the hat in this chronological comp. All you have to do is answer the three easy questions about Tengen.

1. What are the names of the two heroes in *Xybots*?
2. Who is the professor you're trying to rescue in *Escape From The Planet Of The Robot Monsters*?
3. What's the name of the computer controlled car you race against in *Hard Drivin'*?
4. What is a klax?

Write the answers down on an old tile (or postcard) and send it to *THERE'S ALWAYS TIME FOR KLAX COMP, Stalag ZZAP!, Newsfield, The Case Mills, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.* Usual competition rules apply and entries must be received in time: by August 28 at the latest.

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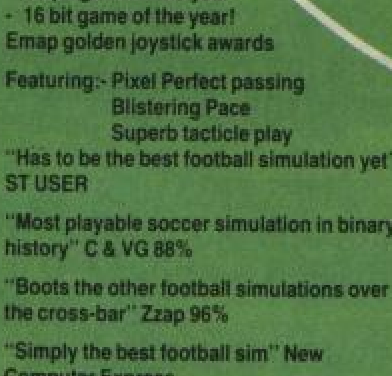
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- Offside trap, sweeper system or possession football
- Genuine goal-kicks, corners and throw-ins
- Crunching tackles, fouls, penalties, bookings and sendings off
- 54 computer managed squads from around the world all with individual tactics

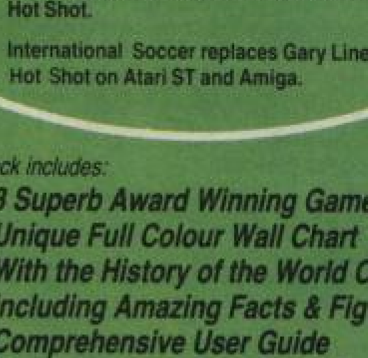
"The best ever football managerial game ever, in the history of the World" C & VG 9/10

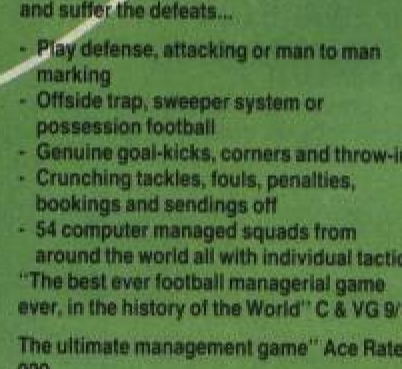
The ultimate management game" Ace Rated 929

"Easily the best of its type" Zzap 64 89%

"The best ever managerial game" Sinclair User Classic 93%







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ZZAP! RRAP

Hello again. I'm feeling a bit better about life in the Stalag after Granny visited me with some rock cakes. Granny didn't say much but the rock cakes were interesting to talk to! Only kidding, but she did slip me a note saying one of the cakes had a file inside to help me escape. Several broken teeth later I still hadn't managed to get into the cakes — if only I had a file!

Never mind, your letters always cheer me up. And this month is no exception with some controversial views being expressed (especially about Spectrum graphics!) and the usual crop of wacky writers.

MORE MANIACS

To all ZZAP! readers:

Thank you all for voting *Turbo Out Run* music as your favourite CBM 64 music. We never even guessed that *Myth* music would be chosen as your second favourite tune. We'll try hard to keep up the good work in this year, even if software houses lower our payment (again). Thank you again for everything... and now Lloyd M, what about that promised music-special?? Indeed, what about that music special (I've read the answer to my previous letter which wasn't even supposed to be printed)?? OK, thanks in advance, and hope you keep on voting high for us,

Charles Deenen, Maniacs of Noise, Holland.

This month we're hoping to print a feature on how readers can produce music themselves, and something on such musical geniuses as yourselves should follow soon!

LM

THIRD TIME LUCKY

Dear Lloyd

Firstly, let me confess that at the age of twenty-eight, the only game playing experience I ever had was with *Space Invaders* in the pub (at least I could blame the beer for my slow reactions!!). I won't bore you with the details that followed but I ended up with three under-ten-year-olds who demanded a computer! Now I must admit that I thought you had to be a computer whizz kid to use a computer, even for games!!!

As Christmas 1988 approached I ventured into a local shop and a very helpful (which reads 'didn't laugh too much') assistant of about seventeen explained how to load games to me. Great! I bought a Speccy +2 (no comments please!!). Everything was well until a couple of months later when one Saturday morning the kids got up early and plugged the interface in whilst the computer was switched on!! aargh! About £70 later we started again and guess what happened? Yes, a repeat performance!

Most people would have given up by now, but I was offered a C64 this christmas for peanuts by someone who was upgrading to an Amiga. Now, I know what you're thinking but it's third time lucky so far!

That's my brief history, and I hope you'll understand the 'simplistic' questions and points I wish to raise.

1. There will always be a place for Speccies, 64s etc. Could you imagine the cost if my lads had started with an Amiga or ST? Or to put it another way, would you give a five-year-old £400 to play with?

2. I've bought games such as: *Batman*, *Op Wolf* etc... but cannot get very far, with the exception of *Op Wolf* (level four wow!!). What this boils down to is £10 to potter around on level one for hours on end!! I purchased a reset cartridge (Datel £5.99) to enter pokes, problem solved you may say! No it isn't! Where am I going wrong? Load up the game, reset, type in poke, return, type SYS number, return. (No game!) If my method is ok! then all the pokes for *Batman: The Movie* that have appeared in your magazine are wrong!!! How about a poke, hints, tips book or even pokes on tape (as with CRASH).

4. What are the numbers in Cartridge Corner? How do you use them?

5. When and how often do you type in 'Technique' on *The Untouchables* game?

6. Why can't software houses add a small note on the game inserts along the lines of: To further your enjoyment of this product, you can etc etc to gain extra lives etc... After all, they expect us to support them by paying £10 or so, so why shouldn't they support us?

Thank you for taking the time to read this lengthy letter. Please print it or reply otherwise I'll accuse you of:

1. Not admitting mistakes
2. Ignoring anyone over 17 yrs
3. Not reading anything over 50 words

Alan, Kingstanding B44 9PB.

1. We certainly think there's plenty of life left in the C64.

2. Your method is correct, but unfortunately the two reset pokes we've printed don't seem to work. Robin apologizes, but sometimes there just isn't the time to check all of them. If he gets any working ones, they'll be printed.

3. It's certainly under consideration, and there are plans to make available a massive tips publication (published by an Australian firm) available through Zzuperstore.

4. The cartridge corner numbers are for use with special cartridges, often used for programming, which have special commands allowing you to input pokes without the need for SYS numbers.

5. On the screen where the game tells you who programmed it.

6. Unfortunately, a great many gamesplayers (myself included) might not be able to resist the temptation of using the hints too early, spoiling the game's lastability. I know using cheats to play through an entire game, like when reviewing a game, can destroy any desire to play it again. As it is, I often get letters from people complaining about Robin printing cheats in the tips section! Fortunately though, software houses often send in maps and tips for us a couple of months after the game has been released.

LM

BARMY BANTER

Dear Lloyd

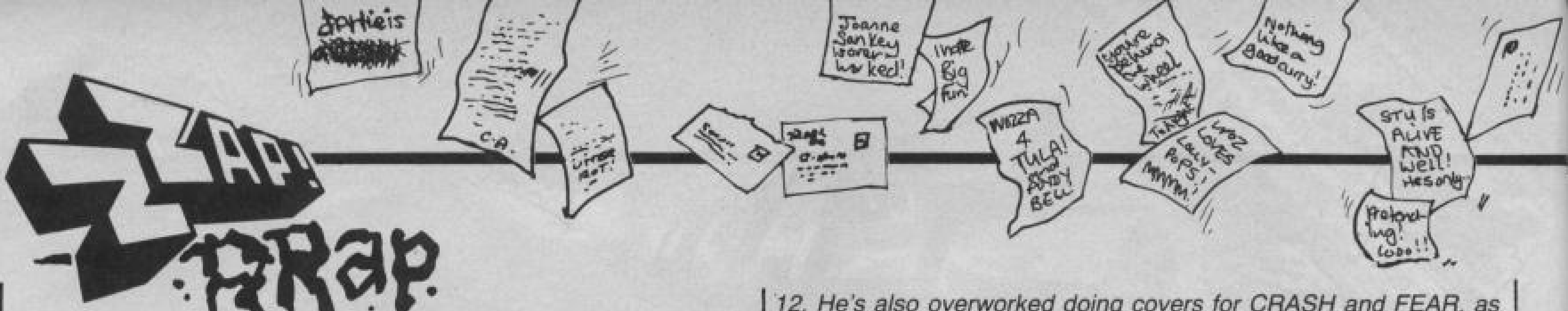
I've just got to get some things off my back and I've got a biro and I'm not afraid to use it. Right, first I think that the *Striker* on the 64 is good: giving it 5% was grating, unlike the game, it's brill. Secondly I think the Scorelord is impatient. Thirdly and lastly, was I the first person to buy *Rainbow Islands*? I bought it on the 20th February and the bloke in the shop said it was the first one on sale in England, Cheers for listening.

Ric 'the 64 freak of Derby' Tomlimson, Derby

PS. My sister says Robin Hogg is a sexy hunk!???

Is there a family history of insanity?

LM



ZZAP! RRAP

ZZUPERSTORE TOO GENEROUS?

Dear Lloyd
I've noticed in Issue 60's Zzuperstore you priced 64 *Vendetta* at £7.99 and in the shops it's £12.99. I know you charge discount for Zzuperstore but shouldn't it be more, as £9.99 games usually are £7.99. Anyway I'm writing this listening to No 7 beats dub mix 0418 on the mega (cool) tape 7. I hope you print this letter as I could win a bet of £5. I'm a new reader of ZZAP! 64! (I started reading from ish 57 by a friend who reads it) I'd like to ask a few things.
1. I've ordered *Turrican* C64 tape but I don't know which to get (*Turrican* or something else).
2. Could you suggest which autofire joystick to get, I've got a Zipstick (I need auto fire for *Retrograde* (what do you think of the end-of-game sequence?) as my arm kills after completing it, score 1,457,100.
3. Should I think about getting *4th Dimension* by Hewson.
4. Is *Aliens* the film/game any good as these two kids in my from always chat about it, saying things like, 'Name all 12 marines!'
5. ZZAP! 64! is the best mag in the universe for C64 games! long live ZZAP! 64 etc..
6. Could us 64 owners have another mega tape with more music on (like no 7) and which game(s) are they from?
7. Why couldn't 64 *Chase HQ* have been done like *Power Drift/Turbo Out Run*?
8. Why isn't Norman Nutz's section in colour or the Zzuperstore's sticks section in colour either?
9. *Retrograde* deserved a Gold Medal instead of a Sizzler!
10. Speaking of such, the ratings should be like this: Full price 90-95% Silver Medal, 95-100% Gold Medal; Budget 90-95% Sizzler, 96-100% Bronze Medal. I think this way is a bit better than your format.
11. Why's *Snare* so hard on Area 7?
12. Can we ZZAP! followers have an Oliver Frey centre spread poster as he's a good drawer.
R Peacock, Leeds LS10 3SS.

As far as we know Vendetta *is £9.99 on cassette, £14.99 on disk.*
1. Eh?
2. You can get an autofire Zipstick, otherwise look at our ongoing joystick feature.
3. Definitely, it's good fun.
4. There are two Aliens games. One was published by Electric Dreams, a superlative single-load game which had a first-person perspective of the alien-infested complex. This earned 81% in Issue 24. The US. Activision game was extremely disk intensive and got 66% in Issue 25.
5. Of course.
6. The Rowland Bros have got disks full of music, and their music demo was a compilation of some of their best stuff. Only one track was from one of their games, namely a Retrograde piece.
7. Everyone's agreed Speccy Chase HQ *was an absolutely amazing conversion, very fast and packed with detail. Ocean obviously hoped to replicate it on the C64 with added colour, but as the release date approached this approach obviously ran into trouble. The machines are just too different for this approach to work easily, and C64* Chase *failed miserably, especially when compared to games such as* Turbo *and* Power Drift *which were programmed by C64 specialists. Fortunately you can be assured the sequel,* Special Criminal Investigation *is looking a lot better. We've already seen an early graphics routine which looks spectacular — but the game won't be out until Xmas!*
8. A question of cost, I'm afraid. Mono pages cost less, so most issues have a mono section. So those features where colour isn't vital are put in black and white.
9. Well, it's certainly an extremely good game with great graphics but the reviewers felt for a Gold Medal it lacked a little gameplay variety.
10. Aren't things complicated enough already?
11. Because Rob Stevens doesn't believe seven is a lucky number! Eh, not really — the later levels are much worse. Robin particularly dreads level ten. But fortunately there's a cheat for the tape version in this issue.
12. He's also overworked doing covers for CRASH and FEAR, as well as actually editing CRASH. But if he ever has any spare time he might be able to give us something.
LM

ZZUPERSTORE TOO SLOW?

Dear Lloyd
Having read the April ZZAP!, I saw a letter asking if mail order services were reliable. At the end of the reply, you informed him of the Zzuperstore, ya said that games would be received within 28 days, after a fortnight. Any delay, the customer will be informed, or have the money back.
I ordered *Vendetta* in mid February, for my C64. I am writing this letter on April 10th. I rang up ZZAP! on this morning and was told the *Vendetta* had not yet been released. I was never informed even though it was about six weeks from ordering date. So I am not convinced that Zzuperstore is a reliable. I guarantee you will not publish this letter, as it is a complaint.
Nigel Newcombe, Kingswinford DY6 9EE.

Vendetta *definitely ran into some major delays, with bugs causing the game to miss one release date, in turn leading System 3/Activision to further delay it to make another slot. As for a letter saying when it would come out, our mail order mistress Carol Kinsey usually sends these out when there's a big delay. Unfortunately* Vendetta *was constantly going to be released 'in a week or so', there was never a time when System 3 informed us of a firm new release date for us to pass on to anyone who'd order it. Nevertheless we apologize for the delay.*
LM

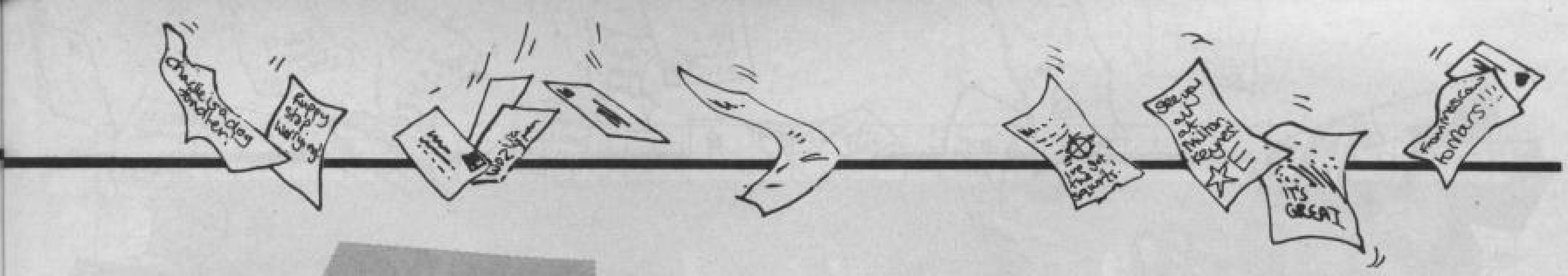
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ZZUPERSTORE TOO COMPLICATED?

Dear Lloyd
I have written in to your cool radical and happenin' mag to ask a few questions. Let the letter commence!
1. Please could you tell me how the Zzuperstore works, how you order the games, joysticks, back copies and so on. I wouldn't have asked this but I've just had my brain swapped with the Scorelord's.
2. Is the statement 'Best selling Magazine for C64 — and Amiga — games' true?
3. I am considering buying a C64 disk drive. Could you please tell me if it is worth it, seeing as most games are dearer than cassette games. How many times faster is the drive than the C2N? And what other advantages are there?
4. Don't you think *Rainbow Islands* was underrated?
5. Here is my top 5 C64 games that I own:
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts Rainbow Islands The Untouchables Turbo Out Run Power Drift
6. When you had the bible of games, some of them were missing. For instance *New Zealand Story* which I own and is great, what did it get?
David Lam, Perivale, London.

1. Hopefully the new-style Zzuperstore, crammed with lots more info, including the software price conversion table, makes things more clear. For example, if you'd like to buy Blood Money *on cassette, find out what it's recommended retail price is by looking at the review — £9.99. Then look at the conversion table, which shows you only have to pay £7.99 if you buy it from us. Now all you have to do is fill in the order form; the game's full name, the software house, the price you pay, your name and full address. Remember not to send cash, but instead either a cheque, postal*



order or Visa/Access number.
2. Of course it is! We wouldn't print it otherwise. The fact is that our closest competitor in the C64/Amiga market used to be CU, but since going Amiga only their readership has fallen dramatically leaving us way in the lead. What's more, at the moment there's hardly another magazine in the C64 market. Your Commodore has closed, as has Commodore Disk User while CCI has gone bimonthly.
3. See above.
4. Yes, and we said so in Issue 61's Word.
6. C64 New Zealand Story *was reviewed is Issue 53 and earned 93%.*
LM

COVERTAPES WITHOUT COVERS

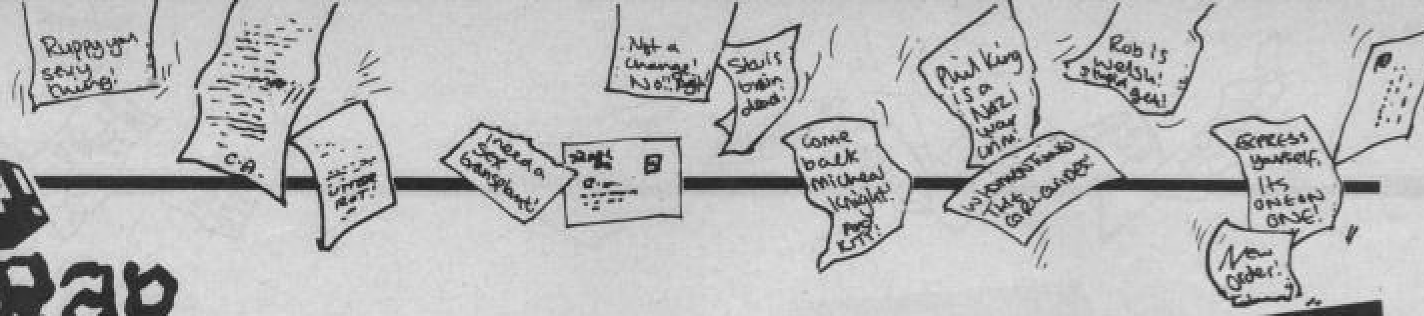
Dear Lloyd
After buying the last two issues of ZZAP! I was pleasantly surprised, I found that you have started giving free covermount cassettes. I thought to myself my ZZAP! Zzaptionnaire must have worked but there is one thing wrong, where are the tape cassette covers?, you know those wee things that you stick in an empty cassette box with your megatapes to identify the tape inside. Megatapes 6 and 7 didn't have one which annoyed me somewhat because I have got the rest of the megatapes that you have issued and all of them have a cover which I think adds a nice little touch.
Another point about the magazine is that I was thinking about becoming a subscriber and don't usually read the Zzuperstore section but found that you have stopped giving free games when you subscribe. I think that 15 pounds is a bit steep to pay out at once especially on my pocket money but I think that a free game would have acted as an incentive. I am now contemplating my decision.
Your Loyal Reader
Myles McCready, Lisburn BT28 2UZ.

Thanks for your compliments, Myles. On the subject of cassette covers we're considering doing some — but only if we have any spare space. At the moment we're inundated with software and features so they probably won't make it into this issue.
As for subscription rates, they used to be £18 when a ZZAP! cost £1.25 in the shops. This meant you were paying less an extra 25p per issue for postage. A free game obviously provided some compensation though. Shortly after ZZAP!'s price went up to £1.50 we decided that rather than increase the subscription price, we would drop it to £15. Effectively a saving of £6, (ie 12 x £1.50 + 12 x 25p (postage) = £21 (new subscription rate). You wouldn't get a free game, but it's easier and cheaper to subscribe, and we've started doing special offers on games such as the current Infogrames crop. Of course, subscribers also benefit when we do Megatape issues as they pay no extra, effectively saving a further 45p per issue. Obviously, our intention is to attract as many new subscribers as possible by offering the best deal. We thought the new low price worthwhile, especially when some readers might not want the 'free' game. Moreover there was no benefit for Amiga owners. But if other readers prefer the old system please write in, and we'll change back to it. How's that for consumer power? But don't delay subscribing too long, because there could well be some more Megatape issues on the way!
LM

OVER DRIVES

Dear Lloyd
I am writing to you as a very confused reader. I have had a C64 and used a cassette recorder for 3 years. But I now want to upgrade my computer so I am thinking about buying a disk drive but I'm uncertain on a few points:
1. What is the sort of price that I would have to pay for a new disk drive?
2. What are the advantages of having a disk drive?
3. Is it worth it in the end after buying a disk drive and then paying the extra money for disks?
Anyway enough of my problems, and now for some points I would like to make about ZZAP!.
a. The charts are great, but how about giving the percentage of votes they got from readers.
b. Megatapes 6 was brill and I didn't mind paying the extra 50p for it either, lets hope there is more to come in the future.
c. The competitions are good and there are some great prizes to be won.
d. The budget bit is brilliant and I hope it gets bigger because I buy more budget games than full priced.
e. Can you order back issues of ZZAP! other than the ones printed?
f. The reviews are brill, they are the best part on the mag, how about the reviewers giving their own % for the game.
g. Rrap is brill, very interesting and enjoyable to read.
h. I don't use the pokes much because I like to complete the game myself but sometimes I have to cheat. Ah!!
i. To all you disloyal readers out there, complaining about the pages, I would just like to say that it's the quality not quantity that matters.
j. How about a list of all the games received by you but not reviewed with overall percentages and a small description about each game.
k. I would just like to compliment Mills on there excellent service concerning the Load-It cassette recorder.
I do hope this letter gets printed because I haven't done my homework so I could write this letter to you.
Keep up the good work and long live the Commodore 64. Well that's it folks!
Ian Sherwin, Manchester M31 3L.

1. Prices vary but the Oceanic 118N is a good deal, at £129.99 from Datel Electronics (phone 0782 744707). We plan to do a disk drive feature very soon, for both Amiga and C64, so any hardware manufacturers get in touch now!
2. C64 disk drives, being serial, while not particularly fast are still a lot faster than tape and very useful for multiloads. Sometimes you get extra features as well: Ocean's The Untouchables *includes some beautiful interlevel loading screens and* Turbo Out Run *shows you the map whenever you die, rather than only if you complete the game. The most important advantage, though, are the many games which are only available on disk. For example, virtually all the superb C64 Infocom adventures, many wargames and the superb* Space Rogue.
3. It has to be your decision, really. If you love adventures and strategy games then a disk drive is practically indispensible. If not, then then advantage isn't quite so great although many multiload games such as Turbo Out Run are obviously a lot more fun without lengthy tape loading.
a) Hmm, maybe.
b) Thank you.
c) Thanks again.
d) And again!
e) Yes, see Zzuperstore.
f) I know CRASH do this, but the Scorelord's against it. Rather than each reviewer simply putting a percentage at the bottom of his review, and the overall being a simple average, the review orocess consists of plenty of argument beforehand. People start off with marks which can be quite varied, but then everyone listens to everyone else's opinions and the marks are gradually agreed upon. If anyone disagrees with the overall mark they can say so in their personal comment.
g) You obviously have a very discerning eye, sir.
h) None of us are perfect.
i) Well said.
i) It's extremely ,are nowadays for us not to review a C64 game. For the Amiga, it's unfortunate that there's a bit more junk about which we don't have space to review. Printing short descriptions might seem fair enough, but as they have to be fairly diabolical and obscure not to be reviewed I don't know if there's much point to it.
k) Yes, it is very good although the price has just gone up from £39.99 to £44.95.
Just this once then, we wouldn't like to get a reputation for leading youngsters astray, now would we?



ZZAP! RRAP

TOO EASY COMPETITION

Dear Lloyd

After five years, ZZAP! is still there at the top of the crowd. On behalf of every 64, 128 and Amiga owner, I would honestly like to say WELL DONE. That 'other' commie mag couldn't cope — but then, who could?

I read with interest your reply to my letter in ish 58 about ZZAP! in general. I guess you were right about one thing — the quantity of the mag may be below par but the quality is for ever going up. Rummaging through recent back issues I'm amazed at all the stuff you've got crammed in; the mag has never been better! For only eighty-four pages, you've surpassed yourselves!

The main reason why I've written in is to complain about the competitions (original, huh?) which are too easy. 'So what's he bloody well moaning for!' say the hordes of ZZAPers. Well, Lloyd, whatever happened to the (good) old days when we had to show our artistic talents? And what about the short story romps (ho ho) of no more than 300 words? Some of us actually want to earn a mega prize, not answer a few poxy questions where all you have to do is read the appropriate review.

On the subject of competitions, why not run a few a year for overseas readers? Reading ZZAP! for someone who lives in Australia, for example, is a privilege but also a little expensive so why not show some concern? Aussie readers have to pay £35 to subscribe so it's only fair to them and to all your other readers to get a prize, once in a while. It would be a bit of a shame if it weren't possible, though understandable.

Ike Anyal, Chorlton, Manchester.

Competitions, well the Scorelord would love to set questions dealing with the existential nature of modern, trans-spacial warp drives. But some of our younger readers might not be up to speed on this fast-moving technology, so we try and do questions which even our youngest readers can enter. But, taking into account age, drawing competitions are fine for this. In fact, due to the overwhelming response we had to the Hewson Fourth Dimension comp, with a stunning range of high quality entries, we did another drawing comp with US Gold over Rotox. In fact, the whole editorial team would like to take this opportunity to thank readers for their entries. Short story competitions are also under consideration.

As for foreign readers, there's always a problem over the lengthy delay needed for their entries. And, of course, some of the top prizes wouldn't be much use abroad due to the different mains voltages overseas. Even some of the games don't work, notoriously European games flicker very badly if put on American computers due to the higher US TV refresh rate. Overseas readers can still send in tips and win prizes, just in this issue it seems likely a New Zealand reader will win a software voucher. And where possible we will be looking into how to do some comps for overseas readers.

LM

BRUCIE BONUS?

Dear Lloyd

Me and all my mates reckon Phil is the spitting image of gorgeous Liverpool goalie, Bruce Grobbelaar. Please show us a picture of the sporting geniuses together, so everyone can see the striking similarity.

I also think Robin looks like Aled Jones, who also happens to be a whining taff. I don't know who Stu looks like, but I feel sorry for him!

Linda Lusardi Lookalike (Derek), Page 3 (Hull).

Does ZZAP! really have such a high transvestite readership and why do they all fancy Phil?

LM



BRUCIE



FATTY PHIL

IT WASN'T ME

Dear Lloyd

I have the culprit what killed the editor. Keep the Scorelord as a reviewer and I will confess — oops I mean reveal all. I will give two clues to who it was, it was not the Scorelord as he was too busy taking over the ZZAP! offices, and it was not me.

Dann, Norwich NR5 9DG.

PS. Do I win a Prize?

PPS. What's the Scorelord's fave computer game, *Gauntlet*?

The Scorelord's staying a reviewer so come on, don't keep us in suspense, who did it? By the way, the Ed isn't dead (well, only from the neck up). You don't get prize, the Scorelord's favourite game is Space Invaders *(because the invaders always win in the end!).*

LM

DISK DESIRE

Dear Lloyd

I have been an avid ZZAP! reader since issue one, in the days when I was a 64 owner, when I was fifteen, right through to now, and an Amiga owner. I have been here through thick and thin, as have I'm sure many others, 64 and Amiga owners alike. I even had a letter printed in your pages, some time back. It was the only time I ever felt compelled to write until now. There are a couple of points I wish to make.

One is in reference to a letter from Sean York, Issue 61. On the front of the issue was a cassette for 64 owners. This is a great, and really good value for money idea. 64 owners get what they deserve for buying your magazine. Now, Mr York asked if it was possible for a cover disk, and your reply was in the negative, yet I can't understand why. Now, before you say the cost for the magazine would be high, I think this is unfair. Sure it would put up the cover price, but so do cassettes, and us Amiga owners don't mind the extra pennies. So maybe it would cost £3, but I'm sure 64 owners wouldn't mind. They are still getting a brilliant mag, and they do get cassettes. Other magazines put disks on the cover, and still charge under £3. I think this is unfair on us Amiga owners. At least you could try it once and give it a shot to see if it works which it will.

A certain other magazine has turned all Amiga. Traitorous. I bought issue May 1990, with the coverdisk. Disk was okay, but the mag is utter rubbish. So what if it is all Amiga? I also like 64 reviews, as I still love the machine, and my cousins have 64s. I buy games for presents. So once again ZZAP! proves its worth. Commodore User? Hah, with no 64 stuff it ain't worth the effort. By the way, I'm not being biased towards ZZAP!: I also buy C&VG, ACE and Amiga Format (when I can get it). I enjoy them all, and get all the different opinions on games.

I don't think your magazine can get any better. Your reviewing balance is brilliant, news is good, and you include some brilliant features, (a sensible chat was great). Finally, I know you will read this letter and reply sensibly, unlike one unmentioned mag. I know because you have a very rare quality, reader understanding. The KING is ZZAP! long live the KING!!

Andis Appleton, Liverpool L11 4SY.

PS. Hi to Bazzer, and all Commodore owners the world over.

I don't know if all this enthusiasm about Phil is healthy, but still on your other point we hope to balance future Megatapes with some kind of special offer for Amiga owners. Of course, your best bet to avoid paying extra is to subscribe! If all you Amiga owners really do want a coverdisk then blitz editorial director Oli Frey with your letters, but it'll definitely require plenty of mail!

Well that's it for another month. Before I go back to my cell I must thank Graham Dowle for the file he sent me — a nailfile wasn't much use as an escape tool but it's the thought that counts. Anyway, keep sending your letters to *Prisoner Lloyd Mangram, Stalag ZZAP!, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW*. By the way, anyone fancy a rock cake?

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ATARI LYNX

Designed by the same geniuses responsible for the Amiga, the Atari Lynx is a technological wonder with some neat new tricks, such as hardware zoom. A mere six months after being launched in the US, it's officially available here through high street stores. The only problem is that Atari can't build them fast enough!

★ **PHYSICAL:** To be honest this is a bit big to stick down the front of your Speedos, it's about a third bigger than a VHS video cassette (4.25 x 10.25 x 1.26"). Control is by a joypad with three options keys and two fire buttons. The two firebuttons are duplicated for when the screen is flipped over for left-handed players. There's also a volume control, and a standard 3.5mm headphone socket. Right next to that there's a socket for the Comlynx, a supplied cable which allows up to eight players to play linked together — each with their own view of the action.

For gaming on the move you'll need no less than six 'AA' batteries which will be sucked dry in approximately four hours! Rechargeable batteries can be used, but these last little more than two hours. Thankfully, a mains adapter is supplied. There are also plans for an extended-play portable powerpack and a cable so you can plug it into a car's cigarette lighter.

The colour LCD screen isn't as pin-sharp as a Video Walkman and has to be held at the right angle, but it's truly remarkable for the price and performs very well. The resolution is 160 x 102 and there's no flicker to mar the fluid animation. Up to 16 colours can be displayed from a palette of 4096.

The heart of the machine is none other than the 6502 chip used by the C64, only it's been accelerated to 16 Mhz (compared to 7.5 for the Amiga). More importantly it's supported with custom chips designed to make programming easy. Perspective and size changes are handled automatically, while any number of sprites can be used. The fractal wave on *California Games* would be impressive for an Amiga, while *Blue Lightning* uses hardware zoom for a super-smooth *Afterburner*-style game which blows away anything seen on 16 bit machines.



gates of zendocon



konami handheld • 3. nintendo gameboy



blue lightning

★ **GAMEPLAY GENIUS:** The supplied cart is a cut-down version of Epyx's *California Games* with four events: Surfing, BMX, Footbag and Halfpipe. All the events can be played with two players on screen, helping or sabotaging each other.

Other games are priced at £29.99 and £34.99. We've played *Blue Lightning* and *Gates Of Zendocon*. *Lightning* is a nine-stage *Afterburner*-type shoot-'em-up with some superb graphics — roaring through the canyons is particularly impressive. Gameplay is good, if simplistic.

Gates Of Zendocon is a horizontally-scrolling space shoot-'em-up with no less than 51 levels. Gates allow you to choose various routes through the game. There are four add-on weapons, a force field and both lasers and missiles to blitz the enemy. This is a classic shoot-'em-up which would be superb on *any* machine, the variety of graphics and gameplay is astounding.

Thoughtfully both *Lightning* and *Zendocon* have an extensive password system so playing them in just short bursts can still be fun. Other carts include a 3-D game where *Electrocop* shoots his way through mazes, *Chips Challenge* (a puzzle game), and *Gauntlet III* (a four-player game).

★ **CONCLUSION:** The Lynx is great fun, a beautiful slice of hi-tech with great potential and one or two fab games already. But it's also pricey, not all that portable and yet to be inundated with software. Using it on the move isn't that credible, but as a complete home entertainment system to take around with you it's very impressive.

KONAMI HANDHELDS

These aren't really video consoles, since they're only capable of playing a single game. Still, they're relatively cheap at £19.99 and manufactured by coin-op makers Konami.



★ **PHYSICAL:** They're fairly small (4 x 7 x 1"), and very light. They run off two AA size batteries. There are two control pads, although the right one is usually just a simple firebutton, and four small buttons (their function depends on the game). The display consists of a transparent LCD screen laid over a coloured, printed background. 'Sprites' consist of some nicely drawn, monochromatic LCD graphics appearing in series. The illusion of movement is slow and unconvincing, with enemy ships jumping from one position to the next as they approach. The technology suggests a fancy digital watch, and the sound is as irritating and high pitched as you'd expect. After a few minutes left alone they automatically turn themselves off.

★ **GAMEPLAY:** Of the four we've seen, *Skate Or Die* is the best with the skater moving left/right at the bottom of the screen as various obstacles move toward him in 3-D. The right control pad controls speed. While there are just three positions for the skater to be in, and success depends on planning a move ahead rather than arcade reactions, there's a good feeling of speed and it plays well. *C* consists of stormtroopers and *Alien*-like creatures rushing a soldier who can move between four positions at the bottom of the screen. It's pseudo 3-D again, but the bullets are tough to see, movement is sluggish and it's very repetitive. *Gradius* shows a side-on view of your ship as various baddies enter from stage right. You can move up and down, fire, and if you do well enough there's a mother ship to beat. Not bad, but rather flickery. *Double Dribble* is a basketball game. Your player begins at the right, he can move vertically (three positions) and right (across four lines), aiming to score in the basket. Two opposing players move upwards, trying to block you. Dull.

★ **CONCLUSION:** Despite the attractive looks, and low price, these aren't a bargain. Anyone who remembers the technically similar *Fire* from a couple of years back would be very disappointed with the repetitive and extremely limited gameplay on offer here.



NINTENDO GAMEBOY

This was the first true handheld, monochromatic but compact and highly successful with over a million sold already. Masses of games are in development for it.

★ **PHYSICAL:** Ultra compact, (5.75 x 3.5 x 1.25") and runs off four AA size batteries. The LCD screen is a fair size, (1.8 x 1.6"), a blocky and yellow-tinted monochromatic but still sharp and effective. Control is via a cross-shaped rocker switch, with two fire buttons, select and start buttons plus contrast and volume. There's also ports for headphones, external power supply and to connect the Gameboy with another Gameboy. Two-player *Tennis* gives each player their own view of the action. Sound is stereo (!) and surprisingly good. Four 'AA' batteries.

★ **GAMEPLAY:** There's dozens of games available for £30 or so, including *Tennis, Baseball, Tetris, Nemesis* and *Super Mario Land*. Playability is as high as you'd expect of a Nintendo product, and with so many sold developers are falling over themselves to bring out new products. Ocean are the latest to jump on the bandwagon and are currently developing a version of *Batman The Movie*.

★ **CONCLUSION:** Compact and fairly battery-friendly this is a real handheld. There are plenty of great games too. Unfortunately, it's not officially available here and a design flaw has emerged with a small portion of the LCD display screen blanking out after a while. At £99 it's also a bit pricey.

VAPOURWARE

Colour systems are being promised by both Sega and NEC. The Sega GameGear looks good, with an optional TV tuner, video camera input and the option for eight GameGears to be linked — just like the Lynx. A launch is planned this month in Japan, but it's not planned to arrive here until late 1991.

The NEC TurboExpress looks like a bulkier version of the Gameboy, (4.3 x 7.3 x 1.8") and boasts 6-channel sound plus a palette of 256 colours. It can use game cards from the existing Turbo Grafx 16, the American version of the PC Engine. However, grey imports into the UK are usually of the Japanese version. The price is £156 and an optional TV tuner will be available for £50, allowing it to be used as a portable TV. Like the Lynx it uses six batteries, while there's a cable to link machines for two-player games. A September launch is planned, but as yet NEC have yet to make any of their games machines officially available here. It's also worth begring in mind for both machines that prices in Japan typically increase dramatically for the UK.

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We all know that no game is complete without a thumping soundtrack. Games such as *Treasure Trap* and *Turbo Out Run* owe their success as much to their soundtracks as to any elements of gameplay. But did you know that with a minimal amount of musical knowledge you too could be using your 64 or Amiga to make great music. This month ROBIN CANDY, the talented half of Fused, checks out the musical possibilities of the Amiga. Next month Robin will provide a comprehensive guide to the C64's impressive software base and Midi capabilities.

It's safe to say that the Amiga is the best sounding home computer. It's sound chip (christened Paula by Commodore) is capable of producing some excellent sounds. Yet it's not as popular in music circles as the ST. Why? Well it hasn't got the ports necessary to link it up to professional synthesizers. These ports, known as Midi ports (see 'MIDI MAGIC' box for a detailed description), can be added on using a third party interface. However, this lack of foresight on Commodore's behalf left the Amiga behind in the music software stakes and it's only fairly recently that it has started to make up the lost ground.

If you're new to music you're unlikely to want to spend bags of money on racks of Midi equipment for a hobby you may not, in the end, enjoy and the Amiga's soundchip is as good a place as any to start messing about with music.

Paula is a four channel device. Basically this means it is capable of producing four different sounds at a time, one on each of its sound channels. Most Amiga music sounds as if it uses more than four sounds. This is because it is possible to flick between channels quickly to create the illusion that there is a lot going on.

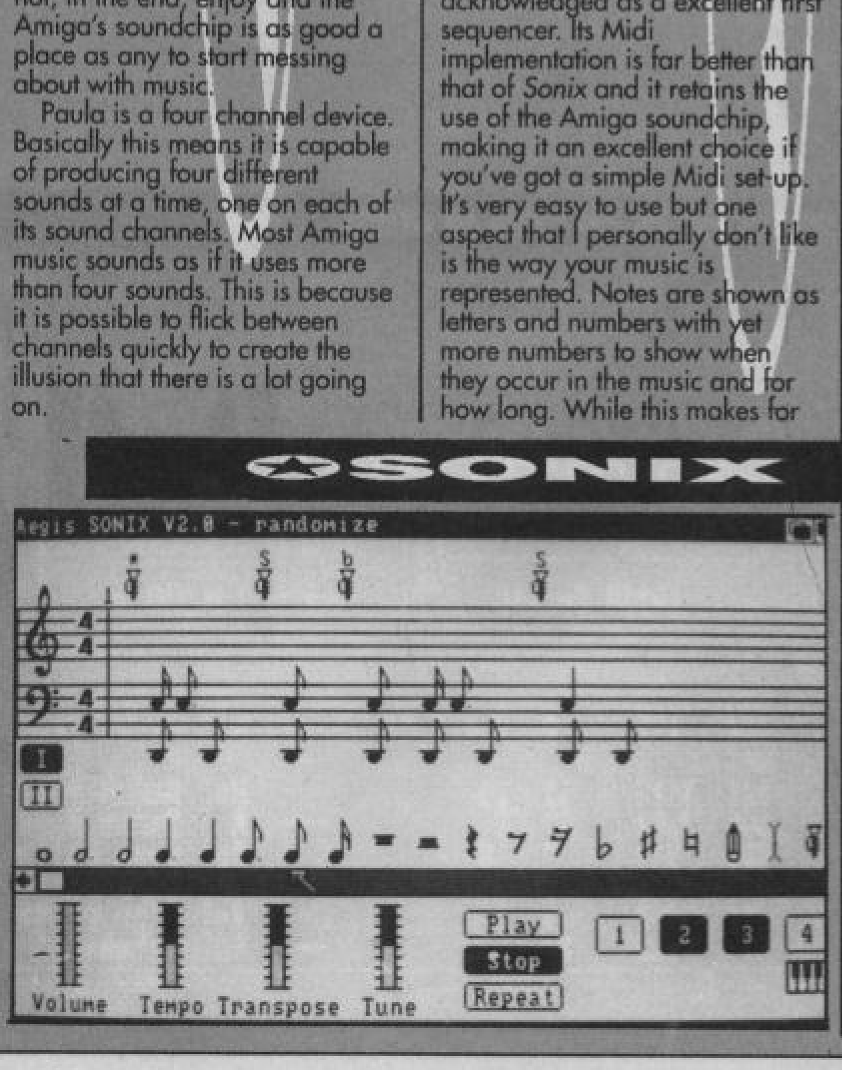
For instance on channel 1 you could start with a bass drum sound and as soon as that has decayed away switch to using a totally different sound then switch yet again to another sound at a later stage and so on. Bearing in mind that you've got four channels on which do this you can create some complex sounding pieces of music.

Aegis's *Sonix* costs just £24.95 (see the Mr Diamonds ads) and makes a great introduction to music on the Amiga. Some limited Midi facilities are available but *Sonix* is best used with the Amiga's soundchip. Music is entered into the computer using the mouse and is represented by traditional music notation, this is a bit of a bind if you're not familiar with crochets and quavers but it doesn't take long to get the hang of it. There are four staves at your disposal, one for each of the Amiga's sound channels with a mixer option to set their volume levels.

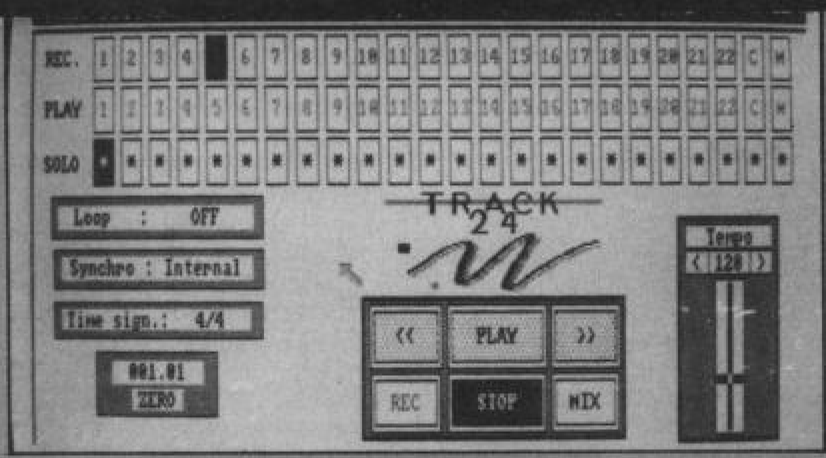
An Instrument menu lets you build your own sounds using waveform, attack, decay, sustain, low frequency modulator options etc but one of the nice features of *Sonix* is that it uses samples. There are quite a few public domain disks available packed full of good samples and demo songs but if your budget can stretch to a sampler (more on them next month) then, for relatively little money, you've got a very good basic music system.

Between £40-£100 there are a whole host of music programs. *Dr T's MRS* (£49.95) is generally acknowledged as a excellent first sequencer. Its Midi implementation is far better than that of *Sonix* and it retains the use of the Amiga soundchip, making it an excellent choice if you've got a simple Midi set-up. It's very easy to use but one aspect that I personally don't like is the way your music is represented. Notes are shown as letters and numbers with yet more numbers to show when they occur in the music and for how long. While this makes for

SONIX



TRACK 24



very precise editing it's a bit unfriendly. It's nigh impossible to get a feel for the music without playing it.

Weighing in at £75 is *Track 24* from French software house, Musilog. As the name suggests you've got 24 tracks (a track is a bit like a stave on *Sonix* or an Amiga sound channel except you can have more than one note playing at a time on each track). Unfortunately, there's no provision for using the Amiga sound chip, this is a Midi only package. As such it is very simple to use with a surprisingly short manual. There's a lack of high powered commands as found on the more expensive sequencers but it does the job adequately enough.

The only aspect of the program that is a let down occurs when you want to edit your music on screen. Music is represented using music standard notation, however, it doesn't let you view the contents of several tracks at once which creates problems when you want to compare different parts of the piece to find out why something doesn't work.

Electronic Arts' *Deluxe Music Construction System* (£80) is another program that displays note information as standard music notation. It's designed to be used mainly with the Amiga sound chip and uses IFF samples though there is provision for Midi. To be honest it's bit like a souped up version of *Sonix*. Music has to be drawn onto the staves rather than played into the program. This is okay in a program that costs under £30 but *DMCS* doesn't offer enough facilities to justify its inflated price tag.

At the top end of the music program market are *Dr T's KCS*, *Master Tracks Pro* and *Music X*. *Master Tracks Pro* and *Dr T's KCS* (both £299) are excellent Midi programs packed full of features. In fact you're going to be hard pushed to find uses for them all. However, it was Microillusions' *Music X* which finally put the Amiga on the music map.

You may have seen this package billed as a 255 track sequencer but strictly speaking you've only got 20 individually controllable tracks. *Music X* works by building up individual sequences (such as a drum line, bass line etc) and then using a playlist to link them together, each track can play one sequence at a time. However, by using a merge sequence option you can build up composite sequences which contain several other sequences.

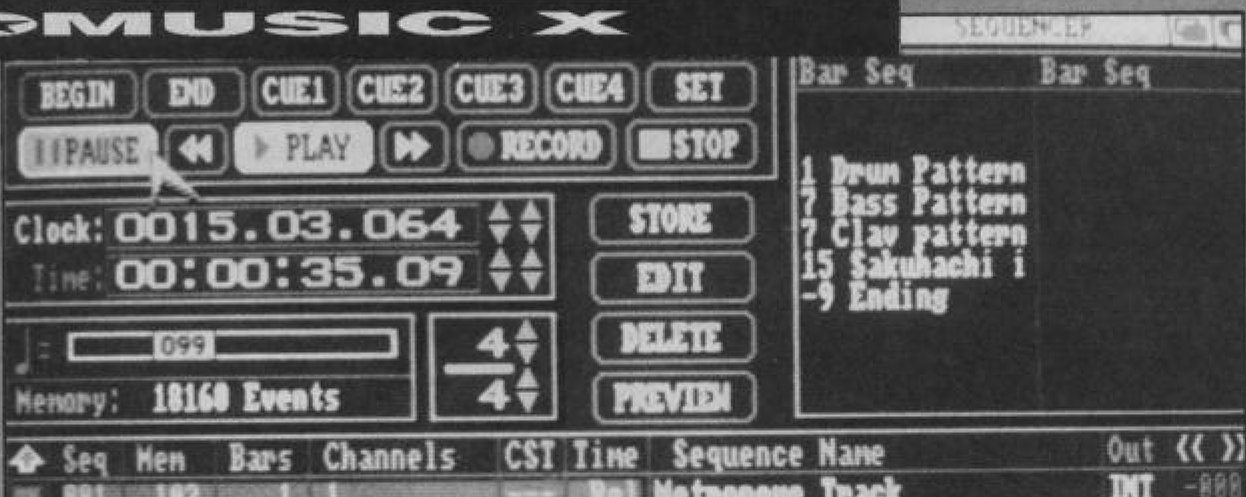
Music can be displayed in two formats, either as an event list with notes, durations etc displayed as letter/number combinations (just like *Dr T's MRS*) or graphically as coloured bars. The idea of showing music as coloured bars may seem a bit strange, especially if you're familiar with standard music notation, but it really does work well. It's easy to spot playing errors and to correct them using the mouse.

What makes this such a great package is that it is modular. Each section of the package, such as the quantise menu, is a separate program. So in the future the programmers may decide that the quantise options could have been better, program a new set of options and supply them as a replacement module. So this is one package that isn't going to be obsolete as soon as the next all singing, all dancing music program arrives.

The program is very easy to get into. Most functions such as record sequence don't need much explaining but I found the manual to be poorly organised. There aren't enough tutorials, and newcomers to music on the Amiga may find it confusing to use at first.

Music X's extensive facilities (too many to mention here) can only be fully exploited using Midi gear. Nevertheless it can use IFF and *Sonix* format samples. It can hold up to 16 samples in memory with any four being used at a time. When it was originally released, about a year ago, *Music X* was sold for around £250, if you shop around it's now possible to buy a copy for less than £100. At that price it's a real bargain and definitely the best buy for the Amiga.

MUSIC X



Next Month: ZZAP! will be taking a look at all that's musical on the 64 and sound samplers on the Amiga.

MIDI MAGIC

What is Midi?
Midi is an acronym for Musical Instrument Digital Interface. Basically it's a communications interface which allows electronic music instruments to pass information between each other.

What's so good about that?
Well for starters you can use one instrument to control another. For instance you could link several synthesizers together and play any of the sounds from any of the keyboards from one master keyboard — no need to jump between keyboards like a demented Rick Wakeman. Add a computer into the network and the possibilities look very enticing.

Everytime you press a key on a Midi keyboard data is sent out through the keyboard's Midi Out port. This data details what you keys you pressed, how long you pressed them for and on some keyboards how hard you pressed them. This data can be recorded by your computer using a program called a sequencer which acts a bit like a tape recorder. When the data is sent back to the keyboard it will play back your performance exactly as you played it. If you made a few mistakes then you can either rerecord just a part of the performance or correct them on screen.

Most sequencer packages include error correction options which will automatically correct any timing errors in your playing style. Known as quantisation it works by shifting your notes to the nearest user definable position. For instance you can set the program to quantise to 16ths. Whatever you play now will be shifted forwards or backwards to the nearest 16th. If your playing skills are totally awful you can enter music in Step-Time (sequencer jargon for entering the notes by hand either by typing or using the mouse).

These days sequencers are fairly sophisticated programs that allow you to put a song together with the minimum amount of fuss. Sections of music can be copied, sounds changed, errors corrected some programs will even generate music randomly for you! All you need are the ideas.

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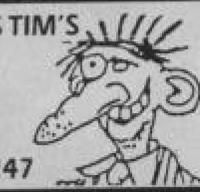
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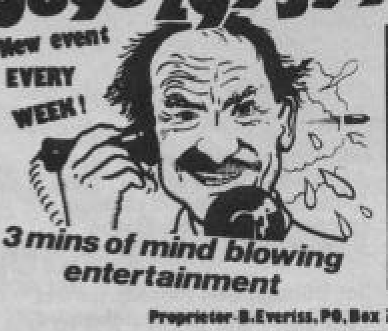
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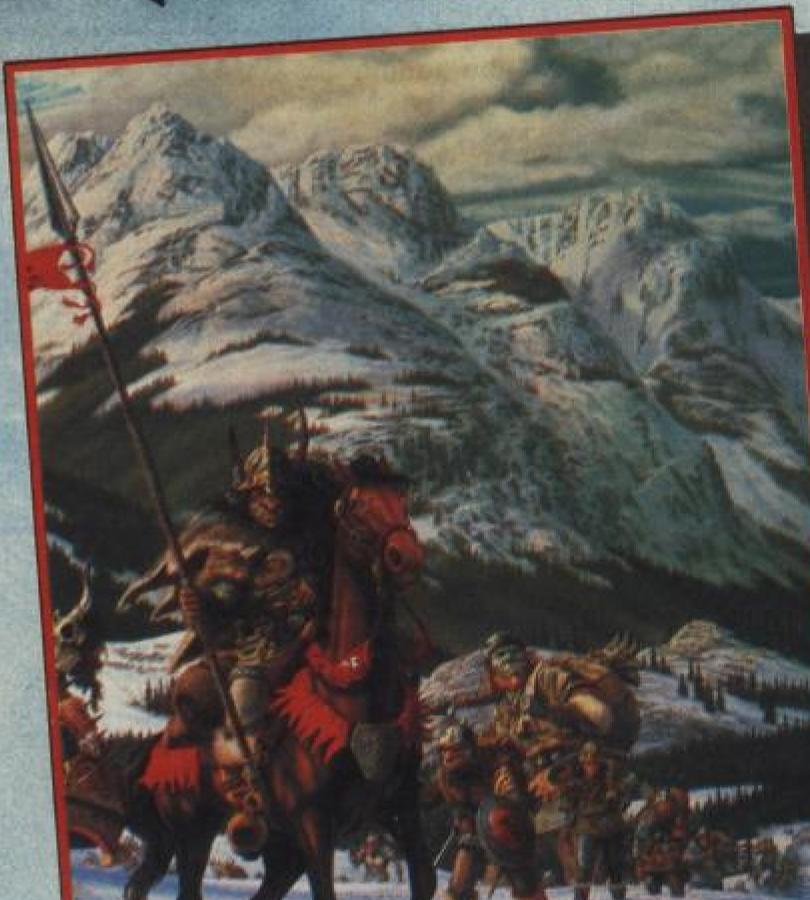
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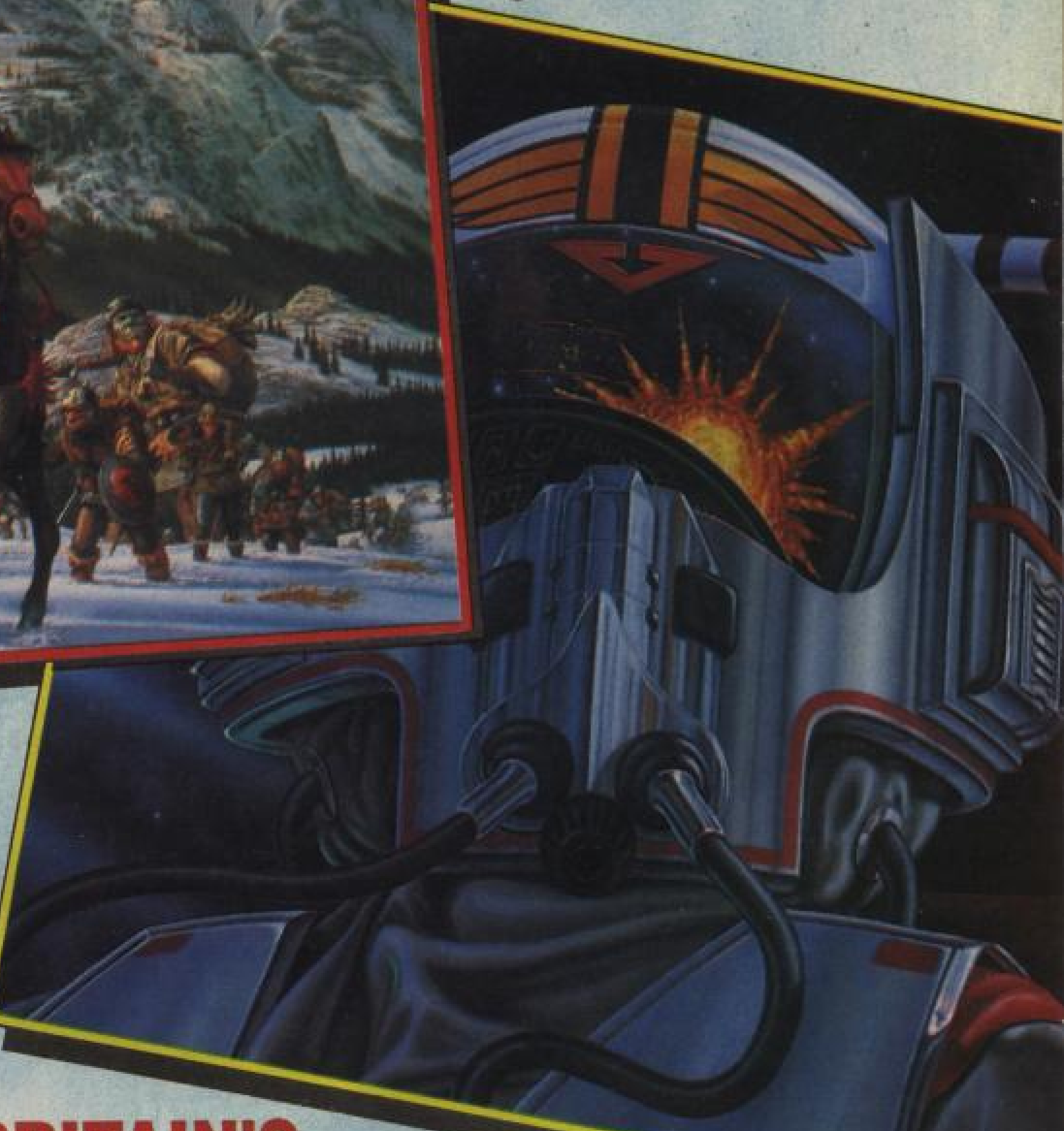
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THE BUDGET BIT!





DALEY THOMPSON'S SUPERTEST

The Hit Squad, £2.99 (Rerelease)

Now here's one to break your hand if not your joystick. The sequel to *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* will have you waggling your joystick like mad in events like Cycling, Rowing and Tug O' War. Still, not all of the events are pure wagglers: Ski Jump, Football Penalties and Spring board Diving require a combination of fast waggling and timing skill, while Pistol Shooting and Giant Slalom don't need any waggling at all! In each event you have to beat the qualification mark to avoid losing one of four lives.

Supertest is only marginally better presented than its predecessor with some Spectrum-esque graphics (why is Daley white?!) and an okay 'Chariots Of Fire' title tune. But the addition of more skilful events makes it more playable, as well as giving your waggling arm a rest (though I found it easier to 'waggle' on keys as you can press both left and right simultaneously!). Admittedly, the pure waggling events are a bit dull (and essentially identical but for the changed graphics) but events such as Diving and Football Penalties are well implemented. Thankfully there's also no multiload.

While not as enjoyable as *Hypersports* (already rereleased by The Hit Squad), *Supertest* is still well worth a waggle.

OVERALL 73%

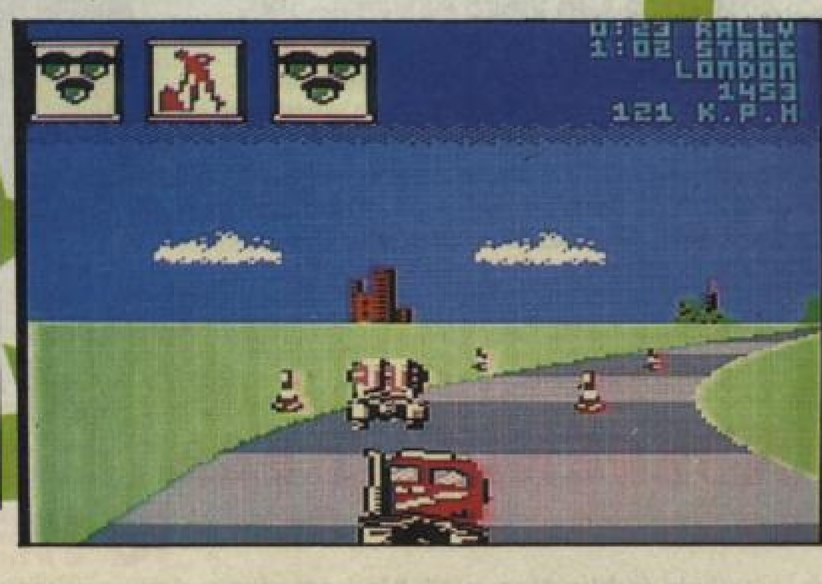
SUPERTRUX

Encore, £2.99 (Rerelease)

Only those with the sharpest eyes need enter this race — the inlay instructions appear to have been written for a microdot! But fortunately there isn't that much to bug your eyes over, just a thin blurb on a trans-European Supertrux race. There's nine stages, each representing a European city, with a strict time limit. Other trucks are simply obstructions to you getting the fastest time possible. Also standing in your way are tight bends and roadworks with plenty of cones to slow you down. To help you road signs warn of upcoming hazards, these also inform you of upcoming road splits. These allow you to choose your own route through the game.

Supertrux makes a good first impression, with bold and colourful vehicles sprites as well as attractive roadside graphics and a scrolling horizon with appropriate features (such as the Eiffel tower in Paris). But as you'd expect of trucks, they're not the speediest of vehicles and can be a bit sluggish to respond. Gameplay isn't that varied either, but the ability to choose your route and some nice graphics for each level compensate. In Issue 48 it got 57%, but at a budget price it's more appealing. Nothing remarkable perhaps, but still quite good fun.

OVERALL 61%



MATCH DAY II
The Hit Squad, £2.99 (Rerelease)

With all the new footy games coming out for the World Cup it's interesting to see how this oldie measures up. The game boasts a vast array of options including one- or two-player modes plus a twin-player option with both players playing for the same side against the computer. There's also an eight-team league and a knockout cup.

The action is viewed from an elevated side position with the pitch scrolling left/right. You always control the nearest player to the ball, indicated by a tiny kickometer above his head — the level of this constantly pulsing bar determines the power of shots. The ball can be chipped (if you're in motion while kicking) or played along the ground. If the ball is in the air you can also jump up to head it. One of the game's most sophisticated features is the 'diamond deflection system' which makes for very realistic rebounds.

Matchday II is certainly well presented with plenty of options allowing team colours, match time and skill level to be changed. What really lets it down, though, is the appalling slowness of the action. The stumpy players resemble geriatrics as they hobble around the pitch. With the lack of speed, it's hard to take the attacking initiative as there's so much time for defenders to react to any move. This makes matches dull and very low scoring affairs. A pity, as the basic control method, kickometer and accurate deflection system all work well.

In retrospect, I think *Matchday II* was well overrated (90%) by the old ZZAP! crew. It's difficult to understand how the game's snail pace and graphical glitches (including the ball disappearing) could have been so easily dismissed. However, Paul Sumner did say, 'I can only seeing this appealing to ardent football fans.' He was right.

OVERALL 58%



A QUESTION OF SPORT
Encore, £2.99 (Rerelease)

This conversion of the BBC sports quiz (winner of the accolade, 'most popular BBC sports quiz of 1988'!) was Elite's big 1988 Xmas release.

Just like the TV show, there are two teams of three with Ian Botham and Bill Beaumont as captains and David Coleman asking the questions. In a one- or two-player game you get to choose your (fictional) team members' favourite sports — and, rather oddly, the captains' (I never realised Bill Beaumont was a racing driver!).

After loading in one of five question blocks, the first of six different question rounds is initiated. Mr Coleman asks question via scrolling text in a speech bubble. You have a short time to select the correct answer from a list of four options — get it wrong and it's passed over to the opposition for a bonus point. The rounds are based on the ones on the telly, though disappointingly the Pictureboard, Mystery Personality, and What Happened Next rounds don't feature pictures; just more text questions/clues and multiple choice options. The Quickfire round is also different from its TV counterpart with both teams asked questions simultaneously — racing to get the right answer is fun in two-player mode.

The appeal of this game is a question of taste; if you like the TV show, you'll probably enjoy it. Though playing solo is dull, two-player games are good fun and there are plenty of questions (ranging from dead easy to dead hard) to keep you busy for a while.

Not 'quite extraordinary' but good fun for sport buffs.

OVERALL 65%





ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE
Encore, £2.99 (Rerelease)

This sequel to *Dragon's Lair* earned a Sizzler back in Issue 22. The gameplay is an improvement over its predecessor's, though completely different from the recent 16-bit version. Here, Dirk begins by canoeing down an underground river, avoiding rocks by choosing the correct route — shown by arrows. After four screens of river, Dirk must get through three screens of moving whirlpools — here he is completely under your control.

Both river and whirlpool sections must then be repeated before Dirk reaches Boulder Alley. In this 3-D scrolling section, Dirk is chased down a tunnel Indiana Jones-style by a huge boulder. Smaller boulders roll from side to side, avoided by moving in/out of the screen, while holes in the floor must be jumped.

Subsequent levels include a throne room and doom dungeon full of hazards for Dirk to avoid — unfortunately, here you must use trial and error to find the solution — and a steaming pool containing mud monsters.

The graphics still look pretty good even now with lots of variety while sound is good with nine Rob Hubbard tunes. But what makes this so much better than *Dragon's Lair* is the vastly improved, less frustrating gameplay. Like the original, the game also uses an innovative multiload whereby the next level is loaded in while you're playing the current one.

Though getting on a bit, with eight very different sections *Escape* offers good variety for the budget price.

OVERALL 70%



YOGI'S GREAT ESCAPE
Hi-Tec Software, £2.99

Mad Cow Disease, Listeria and Salmonella may worry some people, but not Yogi Bear who, besides being smarter than your average bear, is also a lot hungrier. Now winter is over, there's nothing he loves more than helping happy campers keep fit by disposing of their unhealthy snacks. Unfortunately, Jellystone Park is about to be privatised and turned into an industrial estate. All the animals are to be trucked off to zoos, but our smart bear has learnt about this and plans to escape!

Yogi's destination is the fast-food capital of the world, New York City. Starting in Jellystone Park, Yogi must rush through The Forest, The Wild West, Mumbo Jumbo Marsh and a Funfair before arriving at NYC. All six levels are horizontally-scrolling, and packed with platforms to leap between, as well as troopers, snakes and plenty more baddies to avoid. There's also a tight time limit, but bonus points can be earned by collecting goodies such as Picnic Baskets and Toffee Apples! Even more points are earned when there's special objects to collect, such as the six pieces of Yogi's car. Getting all six pieces earns 7500 points!

Of course, all this is extremely familiar — the sort of platforms-and-ladders game that *Jet Set Willy* revolutionized back in 1984. This game hardly matches *JSW* for imagination or gameplay, but the graphics are very good — perfectly capturing the cartoon character — while gameplay isn't bad. It's obviously a bit repetitive going back to level one when you lose all your lives, but for a budget game it's very playable. The later levels also seem to introduce new hazards, such as moving walkways in the forest, and these keep you coming back. Recommended for *Yogi* fans everywhere!

OVERALL 77%

LITTLE PUFF
Code Masters, £2.99

Puff the dragon is sad. Why? Have his parents been tragically killed in a car accident? Has his girlfriend got an egg in the oven? No, he's lost his ticket to Dragonland.

Some nasty thug ripped it up and scattered the four pieces throughout the countryside (well, the flickscreen play area anyway). So, Puff goes looking for the bits.

Deceptively cute nasties must be avoided or jumped over — if they collide with Puff they remove his only life! Other hazards include pits with deadly spikes at the bottom and falling coconuts. Various objects can be picked up to help Puff, including a life buoy to get Puff across a stretch of water. Puff can even pick up a potion to allow him to breathe fire, though the only time he flies is on dying when he turns into an angel!

Sadly, it's all too simple to be of much interest. There are some puzzles but their lack of complexity is compensated for by the single life — very frustrating. The graphics are Spectrum-esque and dull (the two usually go together!) and sound is minimal. All in all, it tends to drag on.

OVERALL 47%





LIVE AND LET DIE
Encore, £2.99 (Rerelease)

Bond movies generally don't pay that much attention to realism, but *Live And Let Die* was an exception. The fictional Caribbean island of San Monique, ruled over by Dr Kananga and his voodoo-practising thugs, is shipping heroin to the US. But instead of invading, or imposing trade sanctions, the US calls on 007 to bust Kananga...

The early seventies movie was the first of the old Bonds to be converted by Domark while they waited for another new one. But rather than program it themselves, they bought an Elite game that was about to be released as *Aquablast*. The result certainly doesn't compare with such Ocean masterpieces as *RoboCop* and *Untouchables* which try and represent as much as possible of the story. Instead the 007 logo is put on the instrument panel, and a new loading screen drawn for this above-average shoot-'em-up.

To defeat Kananga, Q has supplied Bond with a speedboat armed with a cannon (unlimited bullets) and missiles (limited). Damage drains the boat of fuel, which can be replenished by running over fuel tanks floating in the water. Besides dodging rocks, you can shoot enemy speedboats, jump into the air using ramps and avoid torpedoes dropped by enemy planes. In the movie the New Orleans speedboat battle wasn't that long, so in the game there are four practice missions. One is a simple target practice, others take place in the Sahara (!), the Arctic and South America. But you can enter the missions in any order.

While gameplay is tough and somewhat repetitive, it's well programmed (coming from the programmers of *Buggy Boy*), and a darn sight more impressive than *Speedboat USA*. The graphics are attractive and move well, while the intro tune is OK as are FX. Back in February '89 Kati was disappointed the game didn't improve upon the brilliant *Buggy Boy*, which it resembles, but the '3D is pretty nifty' and lastability was okay. Maff complained about the tedious delay between missions and the tenuous connection with the movie. 70% was the overall mark, and over a year on it seems fair enough now it's on budget. Success depends rather too much on remembering the twists and obstacles — sometimes it's too hard spotting the gap in a line of rocks before it's too late — but it looks good, especially the attack planes and tunnel scenes, and plays okay.

OVERALL 70%

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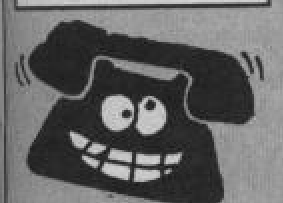


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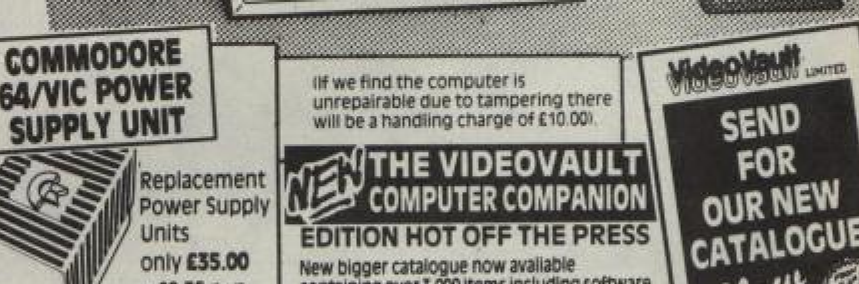
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A CASE OF GOLD

Wales may have failed to qualify for the World Cup (again), but ROBIN HOGG isn't disheartened. He's been sleuthing around US Gold's Birmingham headquarters with a steely gleam in his eye. The slightest murmur, the smallest clue are all Hoggy needs to find a treasure trove of new releases. Thousands of murders, a defecting programmer and a software house planning traitorous actions — read his report now!

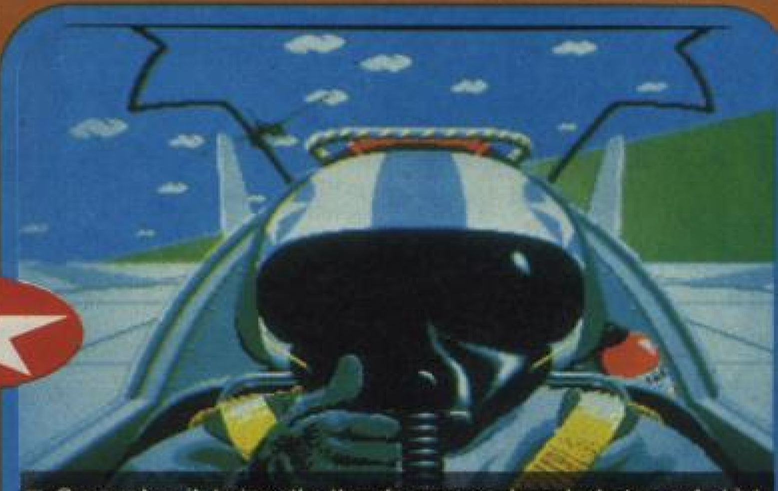
SNOW STRIKE

★ Epyx's latest title *Snow Strike* could certainly prove an addictive blast in more ways than one. With no communists left to blast in the world it seems the United States is getting ready to take out the drug lords with a little military muscle flexing. Time to crack down on the crack and coke dealers by blasting their drugs fields to cinders (there's even some dogfighting to take part in — pretty well-armed these drug dealers). Ten different types of mission and variable training missions provide the drug-busting challenge in this combination of flight sim technology (sporting *F-29*-style cockpit views) and blast 'em action (ultra fast movement is the order of the day here).

Epyx are the people behind the 64 version with Walking Circles (programmers of *APB* amongst other things) providing the 68000 conversions. Expect to handle the aerial thrills of *Snow Strike* in August.



▼ Our sleuth investigates, and that's a hosepipe down his trousers missus! (Amiga)



▼ Our cocky pilot gives the thumbs up as a drug dealer's combat jet gets onto his six — the perfect firing position. Amiga *Snow Strike*



▼ Private dick Ian Forbes arrives in reception, magnifying glass at the ready to examine things and select options such as fingerprinting, wiping fingerprints off (!) and arrest. (C64)

MURDER

★ Coming mid-September is the very bloody prospect of a murder and all the evidence points US Gold's way; time to get the deer stalker, pipe and magnifying glass out of mothballs.

Set in an early 1900s Edwardian Mansion, presented in full isometric 3-D, one of the upper crust guests has been murdered and the killer is on the loose. It's up to you to find the murderer, murder weapon and motive within two hours — before the Yard get to the scene and grab all the

credit.

The Mansion is pretty big with a garden, several floors and a maze of rooms to search carefully. Icons are used to take fingerprints and examine objects (there's 20 potential murder weapons to analyse!). The Mansion guests can be questioned about their relationships with others and it's here that things get pretty tricky as arguments, secret affairs and jealousy between guests adds a 'human' element to the questioning. Guests may know little but the maids and butlers are a hive of information, spying on suspicious characters and even picking up the murder weapon and taking it elsewhere. Things can get very tricky as time runs out. The variety of murder weapons, would-be suspects and different Mansions expands the number of murders possible to astronomical proportions. With over three million types of murder possible it looks like Perry Mason could be in great demand here!

GOLD OF THE AZTECS

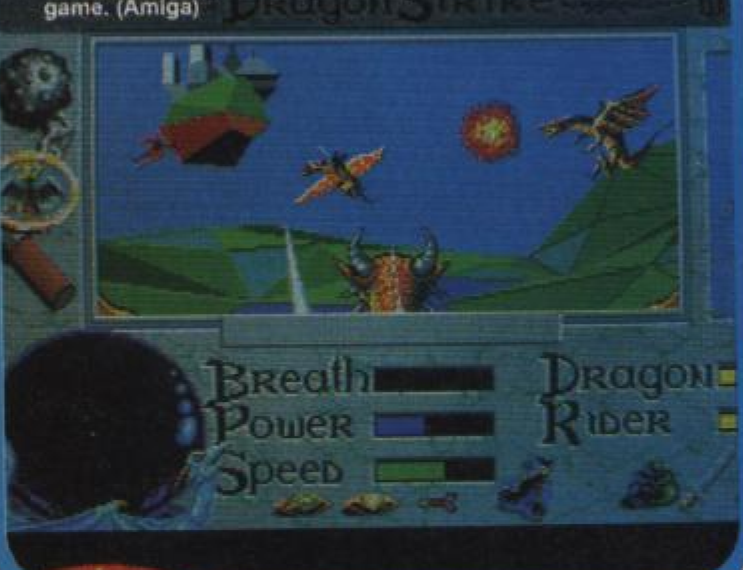
★ There's an odd sense of déjà vu about this rather smart original arcade adventure coming from US Gold mid-August time. *Gold Of The Aztecs* is brought to you by the programming house Kinetica — ring any bells yet? Well, you may like to know that Dave Lawson who formed Kinetica used to be a designer for Psygnosis, NOW do you notice a certain *Barbarian* influence in the characters? Dave has rewritten the *Barbarian* system to create a much more fluid character movement with far more flexibility in control and moves. Also, the icon control system has been jettisoned in favour of 'intelligent' joystick control. The hero boasts an incredible 1,500 frames of animation (are you sure about this? — Ed), swinging on ropes through caverns, leaping huge gaps, using rafts and blasting at pygmies.

It's all about rescuing a fair maiden from the clutches of a lost South American tribe. The game is set over eight levels, incorporating downward flickscreen caverns with Indiana Jones-style traps. Over 9000 frames of animation in total make up the graphics with the elephants (in South America?) being particularly impressive. As expected of a team headed by Dave Lawson the attention to graphical detail is of a considerably high quality, coupled with imaginative moves as our hero swings from ropes, crosses swamps on rafts and does everything that even Indy would think twice about doing.

▼ The very first screen in *Gold Of The Aztecs*, with our hero parachuting into a confrontation with an elephant and a pygmy. (Amiga)



▼ It's an SSI game, honest guv! *Dragonstrike* is an all-out arcade game. (Amiga)





▼ Saving a damsel in distress in *Gold*. The playing area's flickscreen, but animation is impressive and graphics obviously superb. (Amiga)

SSI SURRENDER C64?

★ US Gold's link with SSI is now reaping its reward with the American software house now firmly established as the company for official Advanced Dungeons And Dragons (AD&D) product. The AD&D arcade game *Heroes Of The Lance* and the RPG *Pool Of Radiance* started off a series which has been a massive success, (notably on the 16-bit machines).

However, the future for C64 SSI product isn't looking so rosy. It seems that the way the entire software business is going in the States, with America getting very heavily into consoles and 16-bit, the days of conversions to the C64 are limited according to SSI sources. Because of the initial interest in AD&D, *Pool of Radiance* sold extremely well but after that the follow-up, *Curse of the Azure Bonds*, didn't. If the latest AD&D RPG, *Secret of the Silver Blades*, doesn't sell well then SSI may pull out of the C64 scene altogether.

The latest RPG in the 'Forgotten Realms' epic series, *Secrets Of The Silver Blade* continues on from *Curse Of The Azure Bonds* with the higher level heroes of the previous games entering the Dragonspine mountains to repel hordes of advancing creatures emerging from an ancient vault. High level adventuring and some of the most fearsome opponents yet seen await the 'Forgotten Realms' heroes — and it's out now!

Alongside the RPG, SSI are branching out to encompass new AD&D concepts with the imminent release of *Dragonstrike*, the first dragon flight simulator ever! With an initial 16-bit release followed by a C64 conversion in the autumn this could be the weirdest AD&D game yet seen as polygons are mixed with animated graphics of dragons flying through the air fighting with breath, fang and talons. Progress through the 20 missions and you earn the right to ride bigger and better (and considerably fiercer!) dragons.

Aside from AD&D, SSI are hard at work on conversions of existing wargames including a Pacific (!) version of the Sizzler *Storm Across Europe* on the Amiga. Also underway is the computerisation of *Renegade Legion: Interceptor*, FASA's best selling science fiction board game — planned for a summer release.

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It's overcast outside and the sun has gone over to Rome for the World Cup finals which starts today (heaven for Phil, hell for the rest of us). By the time you read this, though, it'll all be over bar the shouting (and some drinking). Only another 4 years to go, can you wait? You lot have gone overboard on the *Vendetta* tips with maps, tips and solutions cluttering up my limited office space (1 shoebox — size 7). This ish *Crackdown* gets cracked and you don't have to suffer the Apex humour much longer as *Retrograde* finishes with a bang this issue. Question: As we're all football mad at the moment, what happened to all the footie game tips from you lot? Foul is what I say to that!

STRIDER
(Capcom/US Gold)

A handy cheat for the so-so conversion of Capcom's awesome coin-op from J.P. Morris **of Boroughbridge, York. (Even now a good year on from its release the coin-op is still bloody brilliant, hurry up with *Strider 2* Capcom!)**

Start the game then press RUN-STOP, RESTORE, DELETE and RETURN together until the border goes grey. Then press F7 (or F1 — Mr. Morris's handwriting was a little hard to make out) then move the joystick UP then RIGHT. You are now transported to the Third Level. Finish that and you find yourself on the last level!! Well done!

AMC
(Dinamic)

Not so good a game but here's the cheat codes for both C64 and Amiga versions thanks to Pablo and Co at Dinamic.

C64 CODES
On the title screen type in the letters PELAEZ (they do not appear on screen so be sure to enter them correctly). Once this is done a cursor will appear and you can type in the following key words.

To obtain	Enter
IMMUNITY	CREEP
INFINITE LIVES	LIVES
INFINITE TIME	TIMEX
ZONE	ZONEX

Note: For the Zone cheat X should be substituted by a digit between 0 and 7 to determine the zone you want to warp to. TIMEX should remain the same.

AMIGA CODES
Codes for the different zones

1 — NOSTROMO
2 — DISCOVERY
3 — ENTERPRISE
4 — DAGOBAH
5 — REPLICANT
6 — KRULL
7 — METROPOLIS

IMPOSSAMOLE
(Gremlin)

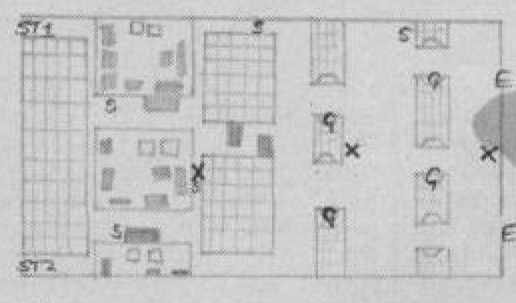
Devoted ZZAP! fan Simon Keefe **popped up with a rather quick response cheat for Gremlin's so-so nostalgia trip** *Impossamole*. **Give us your moley tip Simon!**

When you want to stop a baddie, keep your finger on pause, and although you move in slow motion any baddies in range will stop.This allows you to kick them or blow them away without them moving. This is also very handy for dispatching the end-guardians because they stop and can't shoot back!

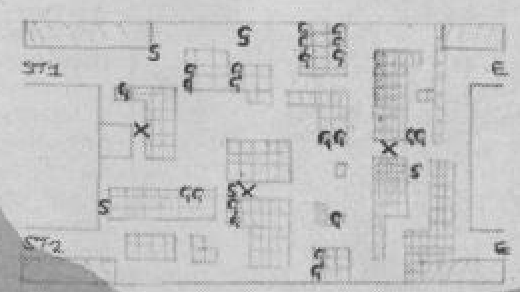
TEST DRIVE 2: THE DUEL
(Accolade)

Yeah, great fun this game! S. French **of Bransholme in Hull found a short but sweet cheat for Accolade's dream machine racer. I forgot to put it in last issue but here it is.**

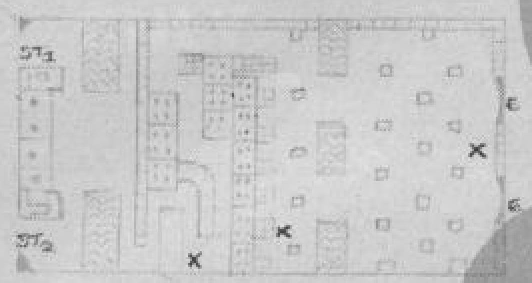
If you're having trouble with the cassette version of *Test Drive 2* press G while driving along in the game. The level will automatically finish and you'll advance to the next load, plus you get an extra life. Don't press G if your car is stationary as the game will crash.



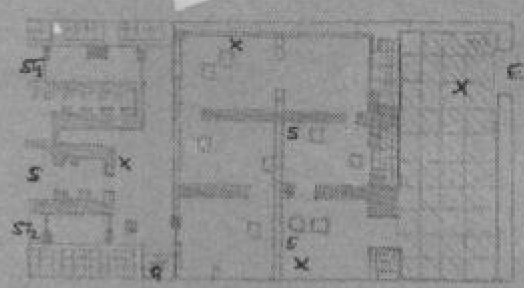
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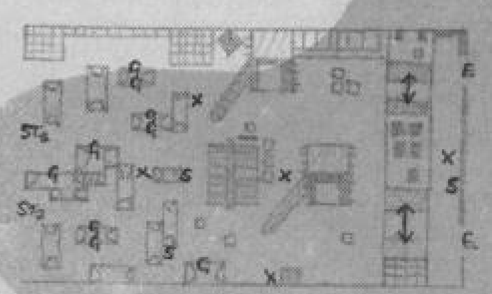
Level 2



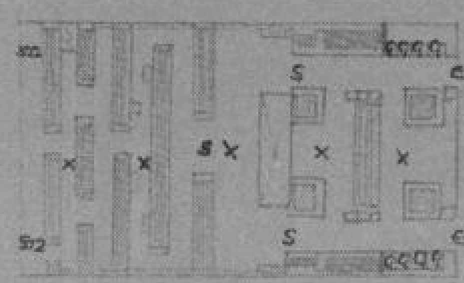
Level 3



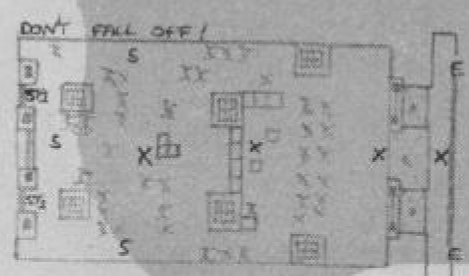
Level 4



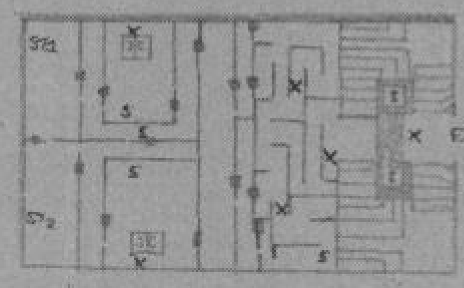
Level 5



Level 6



Level 7



Level 8

CRACKDOWN
(US Gold)

Cracking Tips

Supplies of ammunition come in two forms: 20 shots either for cannon or machine gun so don't go out of your way to collect extra bullets unless ammo levels are low.
Transportation tiles make machine gun soldiers appear frequently. 'Hug' the walls as often as possible. Also do not move off the end of a wall while somebody is firing at you, or will be shot. Electric doors are operated from a short distance — watch for men on the other side.
On later levels (8+), men appear from nowhere (teleportation devices possibly?) — be on your guard! Cannon is more effective than gun as it passes through men, dead useful for racking up the bonuses caused by multiple guards standing behind each other when a cannon fires. Use diagonal movement to move that bit faster towards cars, barriers, buildings (or anything else that provides cover from enemy fire).

THE LEVELS

Level 1 (3 bombs to plant)
Nice and easy level to start with. Just watch for men standing guard. Go along the top to avoid the lower generators where the enemy tends to hang out.

Level 2 (3 bombs to plant)
Again, very simple. Look out for men appearing from inside cars as there are quite a few along the top. Try to stay along the bottom. Smart bomb the group of men by the exit for convenience and to save lives (namely yours!)

Level 3 (3 bombs to plant)
Watch the acid! And also the machine gun guards near the exit. Take a wide berth past the flamethrowing guard, his long range fire isn't nice — hug the bottom if you can (oooh-er!) and then sneak up the side to the last bomb area and exit.

Level 4 (4 bombs to plant)
Here are some electric doors to play with; just watch for men on the other side! Also plenty of men appear using the tiles near the exit. Run diagonally straight up to the exit and pray (judicious use of smart-bombs is recommended).

Level 5 (5 bombs to plant)
Five bombs to place, so waste no time. Like level 2, watch for men from cars. To get over the moving floor, simply walk along the wall as the floor starts to close. Amiga owners can get past the swinging wrecking balls with few problems provided any nearby guards have been eliminated. C64 owners shouldn't have any problems at all with the balls, there aren't any!

Level 6 (5 bombs to plant)
Plenty of guards to blast you now in long corridors (useful to have a cannon ready for this level). Hug the wall edges when sneaking up on guards and use the boxes for cover. Watch for chasms and machine gun guards covering crosses on the far side. Also, groups of guards just over the bridges.

Level 7 (4 bombs to plant)
There are a lot of touch-sensitive cracks in this level's floor. You can see where the ground is cracked so best avoid altogether: taking the lower route is generally best as there are less holes to avoid. On this level Kung-Fu men appear to attack, they just need to touch you to kill! Shoot the controls to open the bridge.

Level 8 (6 bombs to plant)
More electric doors to contend with. Rather simple stuff really but the level is quite long winded, and can prove a long haul if you don't use the map to remember the correct route through. Time is tight so don't stop to admire the view and from this level, men start appearing from nowhere so be on your guard!!

Level 9 (4 bombs to plant)
Time for the conveyor belts. Just move the joystick the other way to stop movement, try to cross the belts at the edge of the area where the belt emerges from the wall. There are 5 men guarding the third cross, so be careful. Also there are men on the exits so a smart bomb or two comes in handy.

Level 10 (5 bombs to plant)
A very dangerous level, as men appear frequently and you can easily be caught in crossfires. Stay alert and keep on the move, hugging the walls when cornered. Once again there are guards at the exit so smart-bomb them!

Level 11 (5 bombs to plant)
This is easy compared to the previous one! Using the radar

watch where guards are on the other side of the groups of conveyor belts. Stick to the sides when crossing the last set of 4 conveyor belts. Also, there is an ambush over the bridge so either arm up with cannon or smart-bombs.

Level 12 (4 bombs to plant)
Men stationed practically everywhere so keep that trigger finger pumping! To use the moving platforms over the acid, just push right (or left) and hold it there to walk over. The last area is
a simple maze, but the fencing is deadly to the touch close up. Take your time, better to arrive at the exit late than not at all!

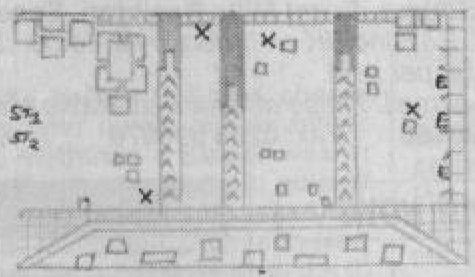
Level 13 (5 bombs to plant)
The cannons fire randomly when you're in range so quickly sneak round the corners and move down out of the line of fire to nip past the cannons, when possible.

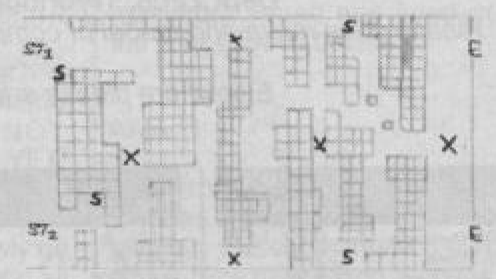
Level 14 (10 bombs to plant)
Things get tough with ten (!) bombs to plant in the men-making machine level, so there's no time to stop!! The bubbles are harmless, the men aren't!!

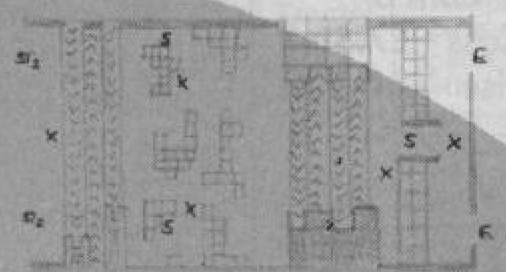
Level 15 (5 bombs to plant)
The middle is a long maze, with men appearing all over the shop so hug those walls!! For the lasers the sequence of 8 blasts is 1 down, 2 down, 3 down, 4 down, 8 up, 7 up, 6 up and then 5 up before repeating. Time it well or else!!

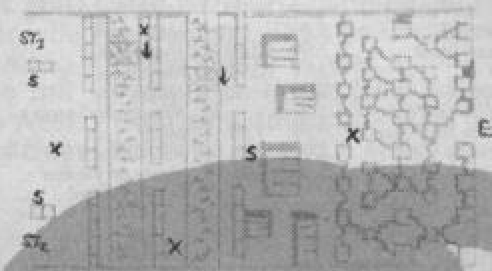
Level 16 (0 bombs to plant)
The final level and you'll be pleased to hear that there are no bombs to plant! Trouble is you've got to time it well to get through the mesh doors. Go in the middle and run through just as they start opening (without stopping). You should just make it. For the conveyor belts stay in the middle watching for guards as you move across. Then it's plain sailing to the end!! Congrats and all that!

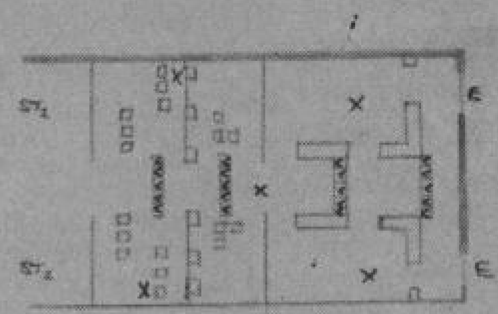
You get bonuses for ammo left, 5000 points for each smart bomb left and 100,000 points for each life left!! Then read the crummy end-message and prepare to play again!! Swizz!

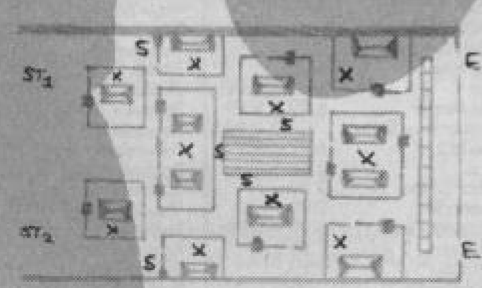

Level 9

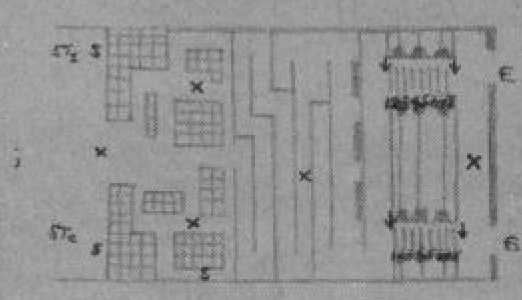

Level 10

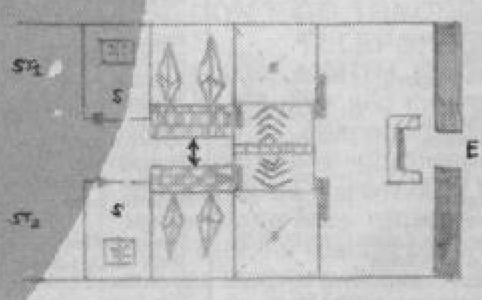

Level 11


Level 12

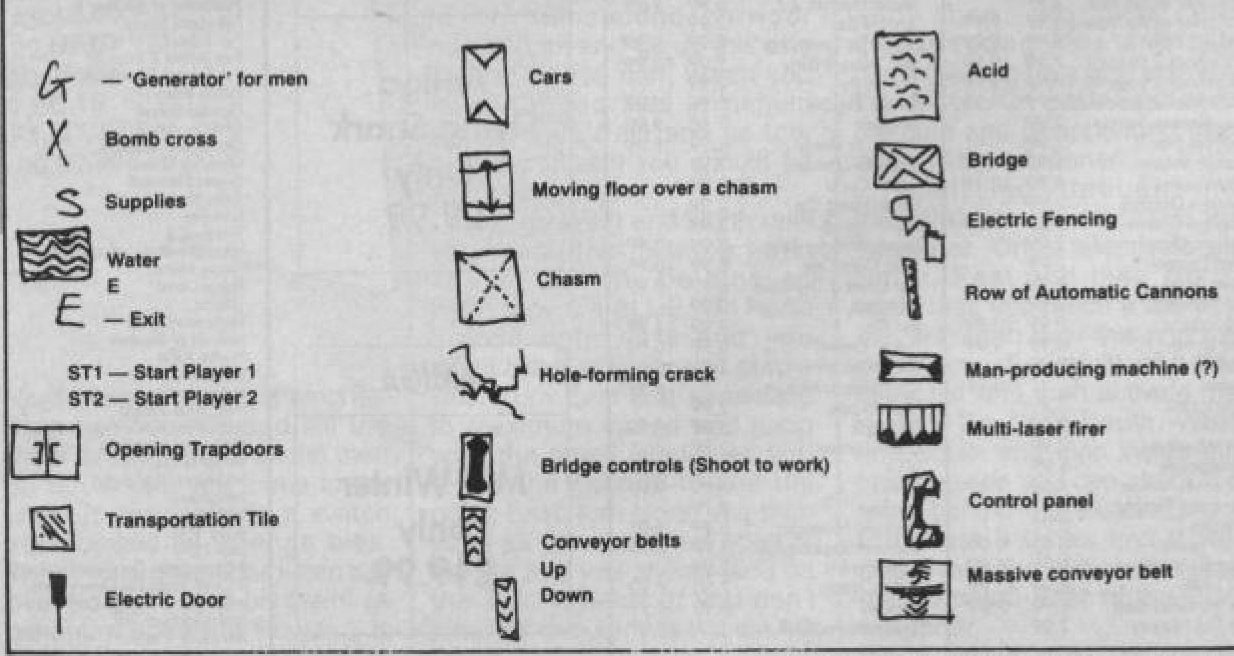

Level 13


Level 14


Level 15


Level 16

CRACKDOWN OBJECTS KEY



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SNARE
(Thalamus)

And I thought it would be months before tips and cheats would be coming through for the later levels of this rather underrated puzzler (in hindsight, methinks a Sizzler was in order). Neil 'Zap90!' Treeby **sent in tips for levels 9-12, quickly followed by an update on levels 13-16, pity they missed the last issue. However,** Russell Mora **of Mount Maunganui in New Zealand went one better with a full set of tips to level 19 (!) and a brilliant cheat for the tape version of** ***Snare*****. I can rest at nights now! The later levels and the end really show off just how devious Rob Stevens has! I won't reveal the end here but it made us laugh and is well worth seeing. The Pokes are by Russell and the tips is a joint Russell Mora/Neil Treeby production.**

Before we go through the game level by level here's a listing cheat and a cartridge cheat for those of you the Action Replay or Expert Cartridge ONLY!

SNARE LISTING

A) Type in the listing, pressing the RETURN key after each line.
B) SAVE the listing for future use (and to debug if it's incorrect). (Insert a blank tape and fast forward past the tape header at the start, type SAVE "SNAREPOKES" and press RETURN. Now press PLAY and RECORD on the cassette recorder and the listing will save to tape).
C) RUN the listing (Type RUN and press RETURN).
D) When prompted insert the SNARE tape and press PLAY.
E) *Snare* should load and you can cheat to your heart's content!
The listing not only gives you infinite lives but a cheat to advance through all the levels right up to the end-sequence. To jump levels just press SPACE to pause the game and Q (normally the Quit option) to jump to the next level, as well as receiving any bonus.

```
1   REM ** SNARE POKES**
2   REM **(C) 1990 RUSSELL MORA/ZZAP! **
10  FOR I=543 TO 622: READ A$
20  L=ASC (LEFT (A$,1)): L=L-55: IF L < 5 THEN L=L+7
30  R=ASC (RIGHT (A$,1)): R=R-55: IF R > )5 THEN R=R+7
40  V=(L*16)+R: C=C+V: POKE I,V: NEXT I
50  IF C < > 9565 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA! CHECK
    LISTING!": END
60  PRINT "YAAAY! THE SNARE POKES ARE WORKING!!":
    SYS 543
100 DATA 20,2C,F7,38,A9,15,8D,B1,03,A9
110 DATA 37,8D,B2,03,A9,6A,8D,B3,03,20
120 DATA 6C,F5,A9,4C,8D,D6,C0,A9,48,8D
130 DATA D7,C0,A9,02,8D,D8,C0,20,BF,03
140 DATA 60,A5,17,C9,08,D0,0B,A0,0F,B9
150 DATA 5C,02,99,72,08,88,10,F7,6C,16
160 DATA 00,A9,66,8D,3D,F0,A9,F1,8D,3E
170 DATA F0,A9,A5,8D,86,F0,EA,00,00,00
```

THE SNARE TIPS

The tips for Areas 9 to 16 follow with the final 4 areas next month.

Area 9

Now things are going to get Hard (with a capital H alright!). Stop immediately and kill the robot circling you (3 shots) then go South until you come to the wall. To the West is a switch surrounded by strange tiles. These tiles disappear when run over so don't stop on them! (A minimum speed of Power 2 is recommended to reach the switch, hit it and then return along a fresh set of tiles).

Head North till you reach a corridor ending in a room with a switch in it. DO NOT ACTIVATE THE SWITCH YET! Instead go to the tile East of the switch and stop there, then turn to the West. Now slowly go over the switch and, as soon as it is turned on, stop and get ready to jump. Just before the floor underneath you disappears jump and as you come down a new floor will appear underneath you, along with a switch. Activate the switch then go North then West until you reach a square of blue tiles.
DO NOT TURN ON THE SWITCH IN THIS AREA. Travel along the Southern edge of the square until you get to the third blue tile then turn South and stop. Now turn around to the North and accelerate to Power 3, so you can jump from one island to another till you get to the third island which has a teleport on it. Go through, avoid or shoot the alien and then travel West to reach the end-of-level (EOL) teleport. (There is another way to get through the first half of this level but it involves running at the switch in the room at high speed, jumping the gap that appears and then doing a massive run-up to jump BACK across the gap to hit the new switch! Very, very, very tricky indeed and not recommended if you fancy staying sane).

Area 10

You can't stop on this level and the aliens are indestructible. By heck it's a problem!
Go North, East (jump at Power 2) and then North (Power 3). Then travel West until you reach the second corridor going North and go up this one as fast as you can. When you reach the red tiles (minimum speed) turn West and go into the teleport and you should be able to see now.

Next go West and North until you reach the flashing bars. These can only be crossed when they are BLUE. Go North across both bars and you should see a square of purple tiles. Turn East and accelerate to maximum speed and jump onto the small island. As you reach the second-to-last tile going East, turn North and then jump as you reach the edge of the tile and you should land on the EOL teleport. If you don't jump far enough you will die, so it is important to be at maximum speed and jump at the very edge of the tile.

Area 11

Your troubles double on this level as not only can you not stop but you can't create a trail either. Nice to see Rob Stevens making it easy for once (Sarcasm — don't ya love it!).
First of all, DON'T TURN ON THE SWITCH, just go through the teleport. Then go East then North (jump Power 3), then West, then North, followed by East and teleport. Now go North till you find a switch and activate it. Next, go South and then West to the teleporter. Go South as fast as you can BUT DON'T TURN ON THE SWITCH. Instead, turn East and North to the teleporter. You are now back where you started so this time turn on the switch then teleport. Finally go East then South to the EOL teleporter.

Area 12

Thankfully all your systems work for this level. And they better had because this is by far the nastiest level yet! Go (carefully!) through the minefield to the West teleporter BUT DON'T GO THROUGH THE TELEPORTER TRAVELLING NORTH. Kill the robot in this area and then go North over the disappearing tile but be careful of which ones you destroy as you will have to come along this route. Go North over the flashing bar and activate the two switches. Then go back South to the teleporter.

This time go through the minefield to the North teleporter. Once teleported, go West over the flashing bars and then go over the disappearing tiles and two more flashing bars and activate the switch. Go back East over the bars and disappearing tiles and use the teleporter.

Finally go through the minefield towards the East teleporter. Once teleported go North, East and then North again until you reach a flashing bar. Go North over this and the gap (jump Power 3) and the other bar and then activate the switch. Go back South, West and South and stop inside the open box so you can shoot the robot behind the switch. Shoot the robot 3 times and it will deactivate the switch allowing you to travel East to the EOL teleporter.

ZZAP! PIG IN a POKE

I was getting ready to map out *Vendetta* for this issue when masses and masses of tips and maps came flooding in within 24 hours of each other. Saves me time (a LOT of time in fact) and they were most helpful too. Vigilantes Jonathan Davis **of Essex, Tuebrook inhabitant** Clint Stokes, Neil Vickers **of Westhoughton,** Shezad Khan **from Acocks Green,** Wayne Jacques, James Mayes **from Ashhead, Surrey,** Richard Bunn **from Bradford and** Scott Billson **and** David Billson **of Loughborough all did their violent bit to bring you these tips.**

VENDETTA

(System 3)

VENGEFUL VENDETTA TIPS

The best weapons are obviously the guns but keep a constant eye on ammunition levels. There's plenty of extra ammunition around but it can be used up rather quickly if you get into trouble.

Avoid using grenades, they take too long to achieve a result (leaving you very vulnerable) and lack a heavy destruction capability.

Ignore the timer as the map and tips should get you through each level with plenty of time left.

VENDETTA CHEAT

To skip any level you cannot complete (namely the first or third levels — the rest are easy) just press your hand (best use both hands) over the middle section of the keyboard including the SPACE bar. Keep trying until the screen goes black, when this happens the next level loads in with all the items from that load collected! This works right through to the end-game sequence! Brilliant. If you're having problems with a level and are about to die, or just died then press RESTORE to try the level again.

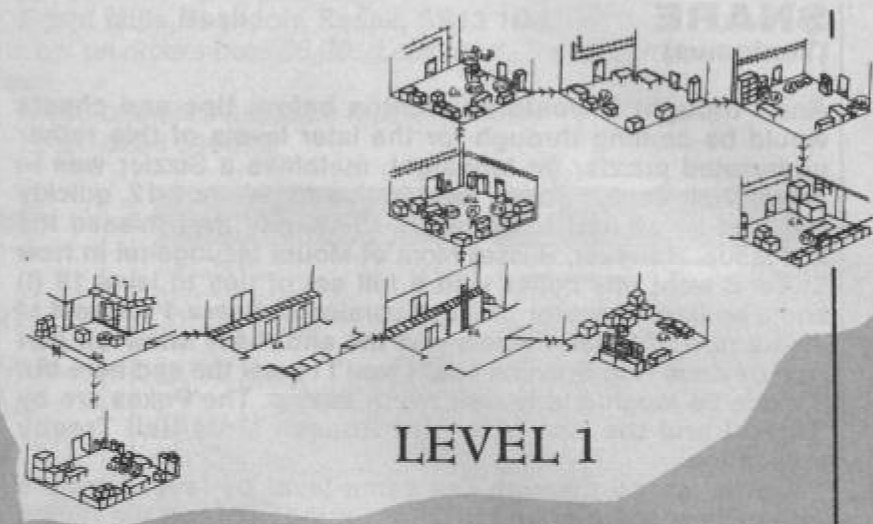
OBJECTS KEY

WC - WIRE CUTTERS
A - AMMUNITION
G - GRENADES
K - KALASHNIKOV AK-47
BA - BODY ARMOUR
RVT - RED VIDEO TAPE
FD - FLOPPY DISC
BVT - BLUE VIDEO TAPE
WAC - WEAPONS ARMING CARD
CCB - COMPUTER CODE BOOK
U - UZI
VCR - VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER
CK - CAR KEYS
N - NECKLACE
M - MAP
BA - BODY ARMOUR
H - HANDBAG
RN - RANSOM NOTE
S - SHOES
D - DISGUISE
B - BOMB
P - PROFESSOR
(APPEARS WHEN ALL ENEMIES ARE DEAD)
EU - ENEMY (UNARMED)
EA - ENEMY (ARMED)

Level One — The Dockland Warehouse

On the first level you're given a fairly easy ride with all objects in each screen highlighted by a flashing cross on their position. This is a level one feature only to get you started. After this level you have to use the map to find them.

As soon as you start draw your KNIFE and kill the guard on the first screen, go to the flashing cross and pick up the WIRE CUTTERS. Next kick down the door and enter the room with the guns. Again, kill the guard and watch him explode then go to the flashing cross and get the GRENADES (you can collect 3 in all). Now go to where the next cross flashed and pick up the KALASHNIKOV AK-47. Go to the position where the final cross flashed and get the pick up the AMMUNITION to load the gun with bullets.



LEVEL 1

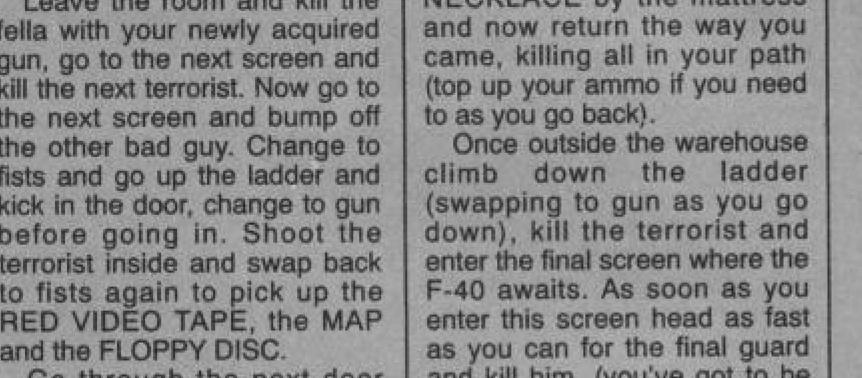
Leave the room and kill the fella with your newly acquired gun, go to the next screen and kill the next terrorist. Now go to the next screen and bump off the other bad guy. Change to fists and go up the ladder and kick in the door, change to gun before going in. Shoot the terrorist inside and swap back to fists again to pick up the RED VIDEO TAPE, the MAP and the FLOPPY DISC.

Go through the next door with gun armed and waste the next terrorist. Pick up the BLUE VIDEO (!) TAPE (by the table with the phone on it) and then the COMPUTER CODE BOOK (by the filing cabinets). Activate the Code Book with your camera and go to the computer to bring up the computer code (it should be an 8 digit binary code). Now activate the floppy disk on the computer and enter the code you saw to receive the F-40 WEAPONS ARMING CARD.

From here go to the next room, kill the man and pick up the UZI. Progress to the next room, kill the terrorist (yawn!) and get the Uzi ammo and the car keys. Go to the VCR and enter each video tape in turn into the VCR (the false tape will show the System 3 logo, the real tape will show the daughter's face and serves as evidence for the police). Enter the next room, kill the mad mullah and pick up the NECKLACE by the mattress and now return the way you came, killing all in your path (top up your ammo if you need to as you go back).

Once outside the warehouse climb down the ladder (swapping to gun as you go down), kill the terrorist and enter the final screen where the F-40 awaits. As soon as you enter this screen head as fast as you can for the final guard and kill him, (you've got to be quick as he can really dish out the punishment). Now rest to recover lost energy and pick up the BODY ARMOUR. To finish the level go up to the F-40 and stand just behind the door, turn to face in the car's direction and press FIRE. If you've followed the instructions the F-40's door will spring open and you'll be roaring off down the road to the first driving section. Well done!

LEVEL 3



Level Three — The Army Barracks

From here on you don't get the flashing cross to locate objects. Follow the instructions and the maps to find them!

Straight away choose either gun and blast the terrorist hanging around at the top of the screen. Change to fists and

kick down the door. Kill the man inside in the usual, violent manner and go to the desk with the computer on it and get the RANSOM NOTE. Go to the table with the chair by it and get the HANDBAG and now go to the filing cabinet and get the MAP. Draw your gun and leave the room to kill yet another man (surprise, surprise).

Enter the next screen and run straight for the man and shoot him before he does likewise (the body armour comes in real handy here). Rest to recover energy immediately after the shoot-out. Ignore the door on that screen, there's nothing in there.

On the next screen with the terrorist in the sandbag trench stand next to the wall so that you have one foot out of the shadow and throw a grenade. This should dispose of the man but if this fails you can run up to him and blast him with the Uzi or AK-47. Have a break (And have a Kit Kat? — Rob H) to recover energy (and pick up some ammo from behind the white barrel if you want) and then run onto the next screen, blasting away to kill the next terrorist by the tank (you can go up the ladder to get the ammunition if you need it), otherwise go up past the front of the tank and up through the boxes to the next screen.

Kill the terrorist and collect the extra body armour from near the boxes if need be. Go through the door to pick up extra ammo if you want and then head up the path to the next screen, waste the dude there and enter the bunker. By the mattress there's the shoes of the daughter so pick them up for evidence. Now leave the bunker, bump off the re-risen terrorist and head down the path past the wire fence. You'll now reappear next to the F-40 so kill the guy there if you want, stand next to the Ferrari behind the fence and press FIRE to get in the car and zoom off to the second driving scene.

Level Five — The Airport

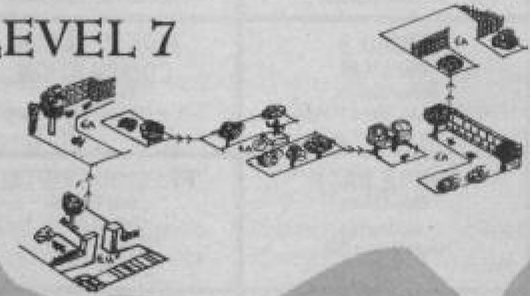
You'll be pleased to know that the flashing crosses have returned for this level so follow the crosses and you should be alright. Even though you near the end, things get a little easier although time is running out and there's a deadly surprise at the end of the level.

Select a gun and blow away the terrorist. Kick down the door, re-select the gun and kill the guy inside. Go to the filing cabinet behind the door and pick up the DISGUISE (all guards will now ignore you as you become invisible). Pick up the body armour if you wish too. Go back out of the room and run through the black door into the hangar (the only items that need to be collected on this level, apart from the map, are extra ammunition so collect if need be).

Go through the first room killing the terrorist, then the next doing the same thing (there's ammo behind the boxes if you need it) and then through the next room in the hangar, blast the terrorist and now you'll come to a yard with one man and a windsock in the corner. The next screen is the aircraft where the daughter is held hostage on board. Blast the guard and go up the ladder, shoot straight away once inside the plane as the invisibility will be wearing away by now.

Go through the plane shooting the guards and you should come to the cockpit. Blast the final terrorist and pick up the MAP in the corner. Now activate the WIRE CUTTERS (remember them?) and pick up the BOMB next to the girl. Now clip the wires in the following order — MIDDLE (Red), LEFT (Yellow) and then RIGHT (Blue). You've now rescued the girl. Stand up and you'll automatically go to the final car driving scene, no need to go back to the car which is rather handy.

LEVEL 7



Level Seven — Central Park

The final level and strangely things are getting very easy indeed with all of five screens between you and the end.

Select a gun and waste the guy on the pavement. Now go through the gates and follow the screens right to the end wasting EVERY terrorist you meet. When all are dead return to the statue where you'll see your brother, the Professor, crouch down next to his head and pick him up. Prof stands up, gives you the briefcase and you've completed the game! The end screen shows a newspaper headline from the Daily Trumpet of you having saved the hostages and defeated the terrorists! The computer goes wild, cycling through your inventory of objects and weapons and your energy level goes up and down like a yo-yo. And all while an ace piece of music plays along as your reward for all that manic blasting action! Good on ya! If you want you can retry the Central Park section again even after completing the game. Just press RESTORE and you're back by the car with your score intact. Now you can *really* rack up the points although it is cheating — so don't try to fool the Scorelord, only the time taken to complete the game will count as a 'score'!!

Driving Sections — Levels 2,4,6

On these levels in between the exploration and blasting you have to drive to the next section using the F-40's weapons to fend off enemy cars and helicopters while finding the correct route through to the next section in time. On these levels it's best to have a friend activate the keyboard controls (missiles etc) due to the great speed and concentration needed. Each driving section progresses through 3 stages — grass, desert and snow — before arriving at the destination. All the levels use the same tactics...

★ Keep as central to the road as possible as it is very easy to lose control. On the bends pull back and left or right to avoid skidding.

★ Do not worry if you forget to pick up the map as the car automatically heads for the correct fork in the road.

★ Use the turbo after forks in the road and on the straights (following a lot of bends).

★ Keep the ground guns on for most of the section as the helicopters are fewer in between and don't drain your energy or slow you down so much. The gunships come in groups of 2 or 3 together so keep your missiles armed upon destroying one before switching back to ground guns.

★ Hitting other vehicles slows you down (this is another reason for having ground guns on for much of the time).

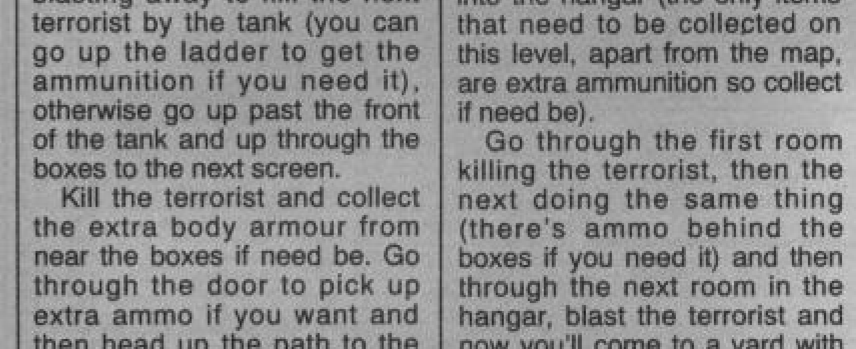
★ Be prepared for vicious bends after going over hills. Use the brakes a lot. If you do spin off the road decelerate as you regain control quicker.

★ Constant use of the turbo keeps the police lagging behind but if they catch up with you make sure you have ALL the evidence from each level otherwise it's curtains.

Paul Cramner **of up Sunderland way has found a nifty cheat for the driving section. Take it away Paul!**

This cheat only works if you have a Reset Switch installed. If you die in any of the driving sections (either through running out of time, energy or lack of evidence to convince the police) then just press the Reset Switch and you'll restart the level! (Looks like Stan Schembri has put in a protection against any reset switch pokes but made the game easier in the process!)

LEVEL 5



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FIENDISH FREDDY'S BIG TOP O' FUN
(Mindscape)

Sporting a red nose and a custard pie aimed at anyone in sight here's Jeremy Longyear **from Kempston with some tips for clowning around in Mindscape's great Fiendish Freddy. Roll up, Roll up and throw that pie Jez! Honk! Honk!**

Phenomenal Feats of Diving Daring (High Diving)

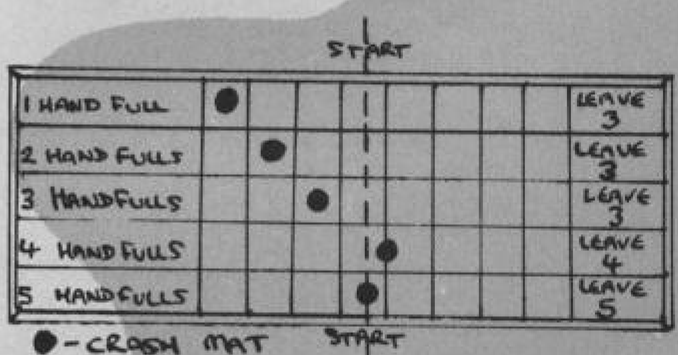
If you don't want to be flat and miss the water with a splat just keep autofire on all the way down. Just push in the direction you want and Fiendish Fred won't bother you with his fan at all. Use the overhead picture in the bottom left hand corner and just keep the cross in the middle. Then you just do the same for all four boards you jump from and Freddy won't make a blind bit of difference to your score (if you want a good score, land in the water and keep moving from left to right as fast as possible).

Genuine Juggling Genius (Juggling)

If on the first level you don't drop anything then Fiendish Freddy won't lob your death warrant to you in a shape of a bomb or a nuclear missile. If you do drop something and a bomb comes on just push up and fire and Fiendish Freddy will be shaken (not stirred). On the next round a baby will join in the fun as it needs to be juggled alongside the balls, all you need to do is get it in the pram. Drop five items and you will have a very 'saw' neck (One more like that Jez and you're out! — Rob H)

Breathtaking Bravado from Hazardous Heights (Trapeze)

Looks easy but it can be very hard if you make a bodge of it early on in the swing. If you want to keep going swing left to right all the time. Be quick otherwise Fiendish will snip you to your doom.
Leave the swing an extra turn if you're not sure but don't chicken out too many times as time is against you. Leave the swing for about four seconds before you let go at the beginning. Hoops are no problem: just wait until you see the rope on the other side and then just pretend they weren't there. Make sure you are swinging upwards when you press fire to let go otherwise flat cakes are on the menu for your tea as you're one of them on the floor (in short, you die!).



THE HUMAN CANNON BALL

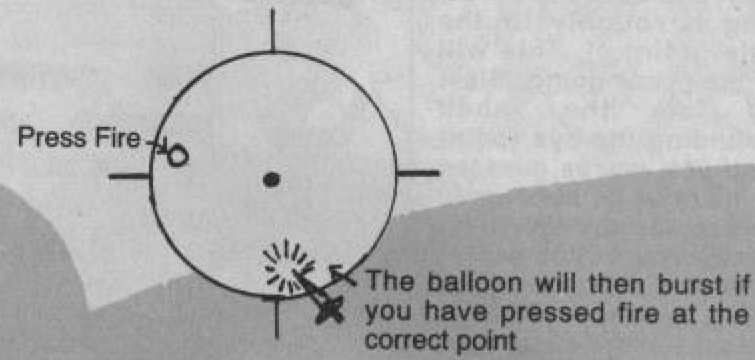
Tense Travel Techniques on Tightrope (Tightrope Walking)

Make sure you're moving fast otherwise a cannon will make mincemeat out of you. On the second level start moving out *as soon as* the screen appears. If you don't, Freddy will punch you out of the tent, he's that quick! You just need to press fire once in the second level to block the razor blade he throws at you. In the last level you just need to move across as normal and press fire when Fiendish Freddy uses the razor blades again. Timing is all important on the third level. Look at the top left-hand corner and use that view to guide you.

Deadly and Dangerous Daggers of Death (Knife Throwing)

As soon as you see the screen just move to the outside of the circle and fire when the balloons reach the point marked on the illustration.

KNIFE THROWING



The rest is easy, just do that and you will complete the level easily and rack up the all important money to save the Big Top! Yaay!

Combustible cannons of Colossal Courage (Human Cannon Ball)

For the Human Cannon Ball event (a decidedly risky event to say the least) all you have to do is count how many handfuls your curvy assistant puts into the cannon, look it up on the diagram and move the platform (the crash mat) along to the relevant position and press fire. Then all you have to do is leave the cannon for the number of moves the diagram tells you to (how many positions the cannon has to fall through) and then press fire to send your brave Human Cannon Ball on his way (and fingers crossed, into the crash mat).

RETROGRADE
(Thalamus)

And now, the end is near...... the Apex boys draw their merry *Retrograde* to a close with level 7 and what a swine of a level it is, even with maps by Andrew Roberts. Even with the cheat I was up into the very early hours trying to finish the final level. It ain't nice! For the last time and in a wave of alliteration let's hear it for Rob, Jon and Steve! Take it away, lads!

Level 7

Well, this is the last of the *Retrograde* tips — only one more planet to save and one more mean, malicious, marauding, miserable, molesting, massive mama to kill (Armfuls of Alarming Alliteration Inc). So, wiping a sad tear from our eyes, we guide Major Damage towards one of the best game complete sequences ever written (nothing like being modest eh?).

As soon as you start this level, you will probably notice the high paced action and the incredibly stupid accuracy of the homing missiles, especially over the shop. THE weapon of the game is available now — the lethal, long, luscious, Lazgun (not much but still quite a lot of alarming alliteration).

Anyway, get this weapon as you are going to need it pretty desperately to complete the game. So what if it has got a ridiculously high hitcount that you will NEVER get? You must have a particularly strong weapon firing out the top — a Powabolt or Spread will do the job fine.

The key ground aliens to get on this level are: an orange walking monster to the right of one of the ducts; a wriggly, green ball thing with an antenna on its bonce (for lack of a better description) (And that was certainly lacking! — Rob H) in front of another duct and finally an orange walking pod (to the left of a pink walking pod) near another duct.

Go for score on this level to get as many lives as you possibly can and try and get a couple of grades of Lazgun (you won't need Ara for anything else now).

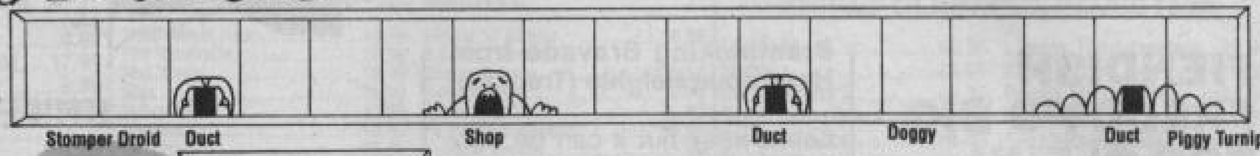
Before attempting (to die on) the nerve-centre read and understand the following (referring to the diagram as usual). The wonderfully weak and very vulnerable points of the three pods are their exhaust ports; these must be shot from behind. The order to shoot them is the top one, the bottom one and then the middle one. ▶

ZZAP! Pig in a Poke

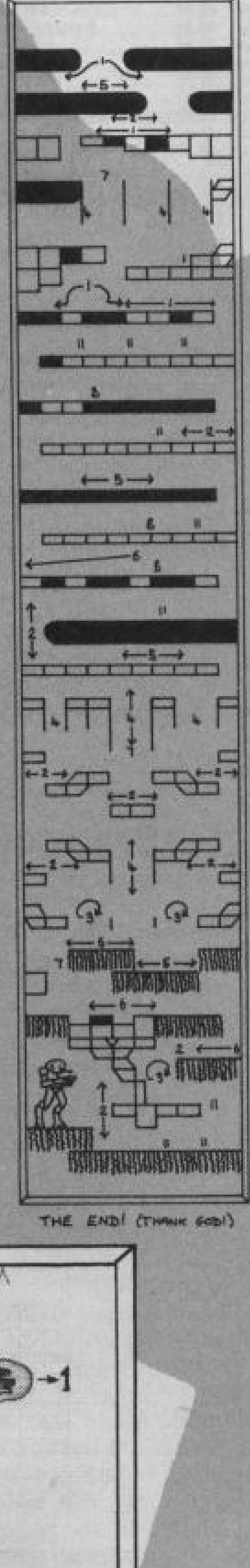
You must then fly down beneath the 'PRESS OF DEATH' and shoot upwards, hitting it roughly in the middle (point 4). This will start the press going. Blast away at the shell surrounding the eye (point 5). And yes, you've guessed it — you must go in between the press and the eye to hit it. Ideally, you should wait at the side until the press goes down, zoom through (shooting the eye as you go) and straight to the other side. Repeat until it is dead (basically).

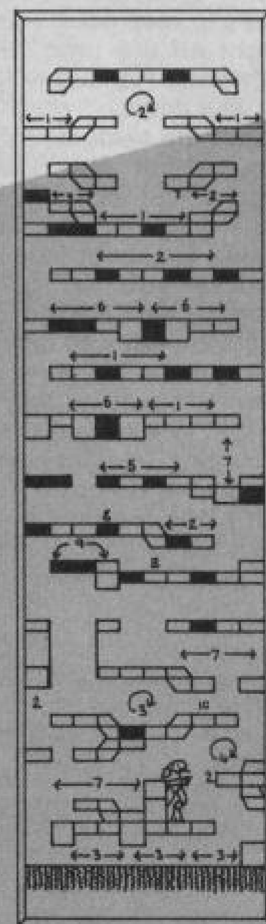
Now sit back and watch the game complete sequence. Is this the world's first interactive game complete sequence? A little cheat that you might like to know about is the SUPER TIME BONUS. If you kill a nerve centre when the time is 0:00 you will get 100,000 points! (As long as it's the first time the time has reached 0:00).

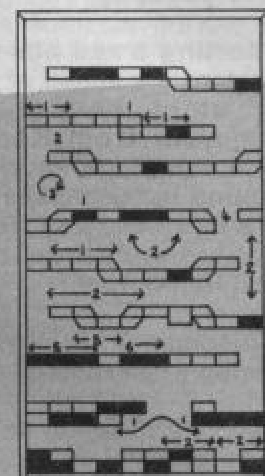
Well, there we have it, the complete guide to *Retrograde*. If you enjoyed playing the game then don't hesitate to send us a donation (in the region of £50). Please buy the game again when it comes out on budget/compilation. Will it come out on the Amiga and will there be a *Retrograde II*? Well, not before out next game — *CREATURES* (plug, plug). (Enough of this blatant hype, get back to work on those Fuzzies you lot! — Rob H)



LEVEL 7 — THIS IS IT!

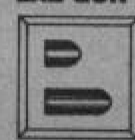






FLYING WEAPONS

LAZ GUN



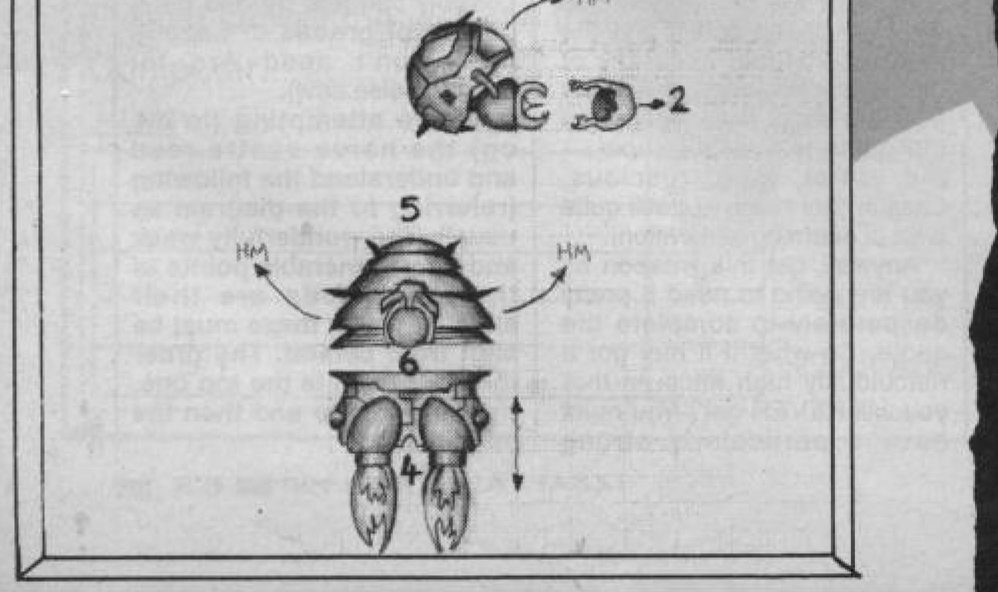
Position: 5
Inc: 9
Cost: 5000
Max: 99
Points: 3

LEVEL 7

Compiled and drawn by Andrew Roberts © 1990

THE CAST OF ALIENS

1. Stomper Droid
2. Blade Spinner
3. Rotor Droid
4. Fierce Flame
5. Piggy Turnip (?)
6. Doggy
7. Twin Spinner
8. Splitting Pod
9. Bouncing Pea (!)
10. Pot-Bellied Wotsit (!)
11. Pop-out Doggy



And all good things must come to an end. A *Blood Money* map could well appear next issue, together with all manner of *Ninja Spirit* cheats, sneaks and giving-the-game-away tips. Bits and bobs on *Turrican* may surface (it's quite a big game so don't expect a Def Guide for quite a while) and maybe (fingers and everything else crossed) we could have tips and the first part of the massive solution to *Damocles: Mercenary 2* (It's finally here, honest! Would I lie to you?).

This month New Zealander Russell Mora wins the hard-earned £30 of software for his well nifty *Snare* cheat and level tips. Winners of the groovy le clic camera and snazzy ZZAP! T-shirt runner-up prizes are *Vendetta* vigilantes Scott and Ian Billson and *Crackdown* expert Matthew 'Mole' Allen. Well done but let's hope the £30 voucher will arrive a bit quicker than ZZAP! normally takes to go Down Under, eh Russell? The address for your tips (Sorry but busy schedules means no SAEs asking for tips can be answered) is *Pig in a Poke, Newsfield, The Case Mills, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1JW.* Till next time, play that air guitar LOUD!!

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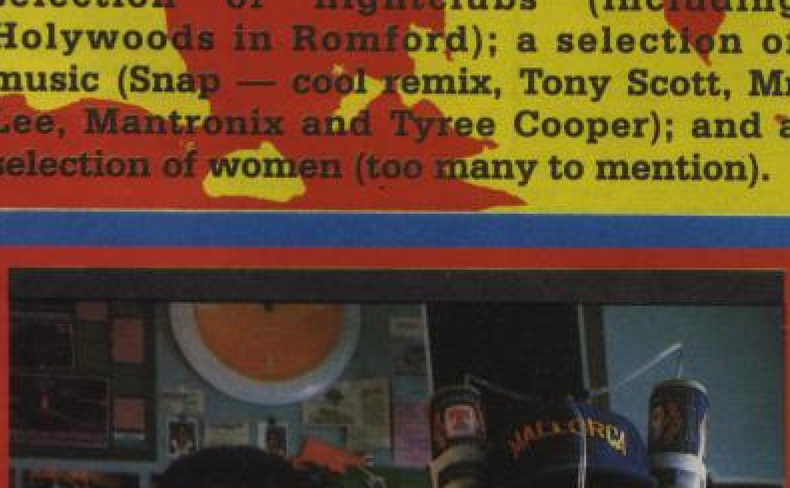
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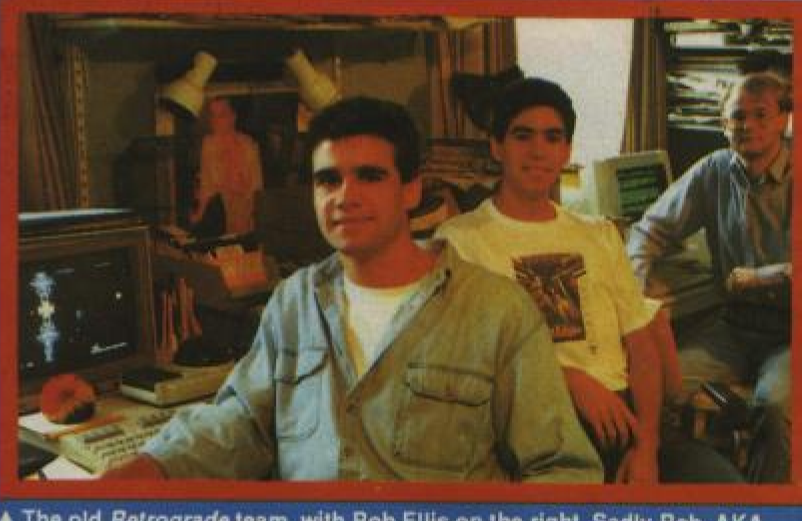
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CREATURE FEATURE

Congratulations — you have found the feature that ZZAP! was made for! Yes, we're back, to thrill and excite you with our diary-of-an-entertainment-software-product (well, a game anyway). This month's instalment has been brought to you with help from the following: a selection of junk food (including Kentucky Fried Chicken and Burger King — at least once a week); a selection of nightclubs (including Holywoods in Romford); a selection of music (Snap — cool remix, Tony Scott, Mr Lee, Mantronix and Tyree Cooper); and a selection of women (too many to mention).





▲ The old *Retrograde* team, with Rob Ellis on the right. Sadly Rob, AKA Transmission Software, has now given up programming.

MONDAY MAY 14TH

John: Spent most of the day typing up the second instalment of this diary. This meant that not a lot of work got done to the game. I've nearly finished the first torture screen with only some little bits on the Level Complete sequence left to do. This includes a 'creature count' feature. As Clyde has saved his fluffy friend from a rather messy death, his mate offers Clyde his collection of 'magic potion creatures' as reward — Clyde obviously accepts. Therefore there must be an on-screen count showing your collection increasing.

Steve: I've been working on the latest level and been trying to get a demo ready to give the guys a ZZAP! on Wednesday. This level sees Clyde travelling through water, as in another level, but instead of being underwater we will have to come up with some other mode of transport. There are half a dozen ideas floating around (sorry about the pun) and the favourites are Clyde standing on a raft, rowing a boat or the most probable mode, swimming with his arm-bands.

Yet again the normal day-before-a-demo routine is back, with the early morning start of work and the late finish at night, usually followed by a few hours sleep then up bright (?) and early to start the four-hour journey, first to Thalamus (Aldermaston) and then to Newsfield (Ludlow).

WEDNESDAY MAY 16TH

John: After travelling half way across the country we finally reached the ZZAP! offices. We showed the lads the torture screen — which they seemed to like (can ya blame 'em?). We also picked up half a dozen copies of ZZAP! containing our *Retrograde* tips, our music select system and our diary-of-a-game, with a little space left in the magazine for game reviews etc. We visited 'ZZAP! HQ' with the programmer of *Venom Wing* (another Thalamus game which just happens to be a shoot-'em-up). Thanks Pieter for the Dutch lager and the scrummy (?) sweets (which I don't think we'll be eating in a hurry).

Steve: We are so lucky and privileged. The thing I look forward to most about travelling to ZZAP! is the part of the journey that we get to witness Dave 'SLGETHGPI' Birch's brilliant handling of the 'not quite black but it looks good anyway' 16v GTE Vauxhall Astra. (If you believe that then you believe anything — like Burger Kings are good for you, there's life on Mars, Dave's good looking and John's got more than one brain cell). After eventually arriving at ZZAP! we got settled down and showed (off) our demos of the game. We came up with the idea of giving away bugs with the game (not the computer sort) which look like Clyde (Newsfield had them a couple of years ago at the PCW show). The bugs may even be given away at this year's computer show.

FRIDAY MAY 18TH

John: As the 'alien sequencer' nears completion, I realise that there is an awful lot of information needed to set up an enemy sprite. All the little options such as expansion, sprite/background priority, explosion types, start delays etc are crammed into 17 bytes per alien. This means that when we come to map aliens over the levels, there's going to be a lot of messing about with binary numbers — switching on and off different flags within each 17-byte range. You'll never guess what all this is leading to... that's right, an EDITOR.

This is going to have to be in memory at the same time as the game code and level data. As it happens I've got 8K under ROM from \$E000 to \$FFFF. But this does mean that I'm going to have to write my own



input/output routines as any in ROM will be banked out so I can access my code underneath. By the end of the night (we actually worked on a Friday night instead of going to a club), my PC was overheating — causing all sorts of errors during assembly. For a short while I thought some of them were my fault (how silly can you get?).

Steve: Today sees me halting production on *Creatures* for a few weeks to work on another Thalamus project, *The Search For Sharla*. The game is near completion so my added bit of sparkle will be in the form of graphics for the 'game complete' sequence. Without giving too much away, there will be a bitmap screen with a 4x3 sprite grid on top with loads of animations.

MONDAY MAY 21ST

John: We finished off the weekend last night in Burger King (what a surprise). It had been ages since we had one (well, a week anyway). I think Steve's burger was infected with BSE and consequently he's picked up 'mad cow disease'. Mind you, it's a tough job to tell the difference in his behaviour.

The alien editor is taking shape, with a good looking menu screen. I think I'll chuck in the current alien being edited at the top of the screen. This means any alterations made to it will be instantly visible (eg animation and colour patterns, multi/hi-res modes etc).

Steve: I'm continuing with the *Sharla* graphics but instead of doing the bitmap screen I've started on the sprites. This is a difficult task as I haven't got any editors that let me edit 4x3 sprites, so I have to design the image in two parts. To make a break from doing graphics I loaded up John's real cool music editor and spent a few hours adding some vibes to the title music. I soon got bored of that too, so come 8.30pm we all went for a drink down at Dukes.

THURSDAY MAY 24TH

John: The last few days have been extremely long ones. The editor is nearly complete, with just one more option to do. It's relatively easy to set up an alien, and map him/her/it onto the level. Received a phone call today from a certain Andrew Roberts (there you go Andy — immortal fame!). He got our number off Robin 'the phone book' Hogg. We had a (very) long chat about the game, with loads of ideas for the torture chambers being thrown at me. It's hard to draw a screen which is being described to you over the phone, so I've convinced Andy to post the ideas.

▼ In the graveyard — the final level currently lacking parallax scrolling.





▲ The map editor. If you squint you can see all the different graphics which will be used to create maps shown before each level.

Steve: Finally finished *The Search For Sharla* graphics, and the end result is pretty good, so it's back to work on the best game of all time, *Creatures* (*Retrograde* being the second best — bias, me!, never).

Went to Burger King last night (again) and surprisingly didn't see any Mad Cows, apart from Niki, our little sister (just kidding). Incidentally, if anyone is wondering why the *Retrograde* cheat is 'I hate Bros' here's why: in the many months of production on *Retrograde* we would very often awaken to the sounds of 'I Owe You Nothing', 'I Quit' and many other songs Bros were responsible for, not to mention the little 'brosette' that now lived with us. Eventually Niki grew out of this stage and we no longer have to be subjected to such torture. However, recently she has shown signs of another pop music following, which could arguably be as bad as Bros: they are 'And Why Not'. Can you guess what the cheat will be for *Creatures*?

TUESDAY MAY 29TH

John: Looking at Steve's entry about us being tortured by Bros, gives me an idea for a torture screen. How about a Fuzzy tied to a wall, with a very large speaker in front of him, connected to a very powerful amplifier, connected to a record player which is playing music by Bros? What a NIGHTMARE! Not even I could subject a Fuzzy-Wuzzy to Bros music. (Actually, I can't recall any of Bros's records containing music!).

On the subject of torture screens, we received a load of ideas from Andy Roberts this morning which were 'absolutely brilliant' (in his own words). All I've got to do now is find the time to put the ideas we've got into the game.

Also spoke to Dave 'OJLG' today about little Clydes in the margins of ZZAP! (like Rockford a year or so ago). Is this a good idea? What do you lot reckon? I think we have a right to know.

Steve: Today I carried on with work to the shop, the actual layout of which has been adjusted to perfection. The witch has been finished (make-up and all) and we may put a cauldron in with the cute little magic potion creatures splashing into it and being boiled alive (call the RSPCA!). This afternoon we had a visit from two of our friends Mark Palmer and Steve Packer, who were full of ideas for the torture screens. Since the first torture screen was done, anyone who has seen it has offered loads of ideas for more screens: what we will probably do is combine a lot of ideas for each of the torture screens.

WEDNESDAY MAY 30TH

John: I've been adding some small options to the alien editor which make using it a little easier. However, I've discovered a problem with my keyboard ▶





▲ John's creature editor shows the complexity of the sprite animation in *Creatures* .

debounce routine — it doesn't always work! This will need a little investigation. When I set up an alien this morning to test the editor was working, I noticed a bug in my 'AMOVE' routine. This is a subroutine which moves aliens around the screen. So far the next hour I'm rewriting code which was originally written a year ago.

We received more torture chamber designs from Andy Roberts today — he's working on the screens harder than we are! He also sent us a demo disk with some pretty nifty stuff on it. Thanks.

Andy Smith (another Andy?) saw the torture screen a few days ago, and heard the music. He and I decided that Steve can't write cute music as it always has a funky bass and drums and that 'synth' instrument in. (Personally, I don't think he can write music at all, but don't tell him I said that).

Steve: The shop graphics still aren't finished. I've adjusted the two creatures that hold the status area at the top of the screen: inside this status box go the magic potion creatures you have collected. There is also a status area at the bottom of the screen which is for your weapon selection. We have allowed room on the screen for a speech box so the witch can talk to Clyde. She will also describe the potions you may want to have concocted; it's these potions that Clyde will drink and be given magical weapon powers.

I also have the task of doing the shop music, I would say that I'm going to make it cute music but no-one thinks I can do that, so it's the normal synth music.

FRIDAY JUNE 1ST

John: I modified the alien movement routine today to allow looping back over a series of movements (and not just the current direction as it used to be). Starting to get a tad bored during assembly. It takes about 7 seconds to assemble the game at the moment, including the 8K of editor code. This isn't too bad I suppose, especially compared to my mate Andy Smith's game. His assembly time is about 15 minutes.

Worked up to 7 o'clock tonight but I started getting hungry and unfortunately my stomach takes priority over work. Anyway, I had to stop some time around then so I could get ready to go clubbin' tonight.

Steve: This morning I finished the shop music, and a very good bit it is too. It's my favourite piece in the game so far, with the title music in second place (and they both have bass 'n' drums in).

I've been thinking about the fourth level graphics and aliens, John and I have decided on making it a graveyard scene which leads to a castle at the end of the game. In the castle will be where most of your fellow fuzzy-wuzzies are being held captive: your ultimate task is to rescue all of your villagers from certain death. You then return them back to your village and live in peace forever and ever, The End (what a happy ending).

Also today I thought of another weapon that Clyde could get from drinking his magic potions. It's a grenade-type weapon which may look similar to the bombs you fire out in *Vulcan Venture*.

TUESDAY JUNE 5TH

John: The editor is finally finished — give or take a few minor bugs. I'm now starting to add some alien movement patterns to the level data. I hate timing an enemy animation to a movement pattern, having to get it to animate at the correct points within the pattern. It always takes so long. Talked to Dave 'ITOTBABR' Birch today trying to persuade him to take us up to Newsfield next week. Then we can get some feed back from the lads on any demos we have for them.

By the way, if you want to know what any of the abbreviations associated with Dave are, don't hesitate to phone Thalamus and ask! (hee, hee).

Steve: It's time to design some more 'unfriendly, repulsive, earth-ridden slime' (well, some aliens). The extra few aliens I've added to the level 'alien sprite bank' have used up all the animations John's allowed, so next we will be working out some pretty decent patterns for these aliens to move around in (some will also shoot fireballs etc). Now all John has to do is type these patterns into PDS, which he says is boring and frustrating but I'm sure he likes it really!



ZZAP! TesT

UNREAL

A

Ubi Soft, Amiga £29.99

Unreal was once a barren planet. But then the Sleeper awoke long enough to send a servant to create life there. The necessary ingredients were life-giving eggs, the four elements (water, air, earth, fire) and two guardians to maintain the balance between good and evil. Unfortunately, the servant was killed by a meteor and his possessions scattered, bringing chaos. The guardians soon become all powerful, controlling everything from dinosaurs to the smallest bee. The only exception was life in one isolated valley where a life egg fell which the guardians missed.

It was here that Isolde and Artaban were born. As they grew up they met a friendly dragon. But one day the servant of a guardian saw her. He took Isolde to his master, who was instantly captivated by her beauty. Isolde agreed to marry him to save the valley.

But Artaban, after arming himself with the 'changing sword' (which can shoot fire or water if dipped in these elements), climbed onto the dragon and set off to rescue Isolde.

The game has eight levels: five have Artaban riding the dragon in a super-fast 3-D arcade game. Three are horizontally scrolling arcade adventures. Level one is 3-D, with the dragon zooming though a forest packed with trees, bridges to fly under, huge dinosaurs and swooping bats. Pressing fire will destroy many of the creatures, useful for when you dive down to pick up bonus objects, shield and improved firepower. Points are vital since they contribute to energy. Lose a lot of energy and you pause, as if you'd lost a life. If you lose all energy you can continue in 'training mode' where no points are scored.

If you survive this level Artaban gets off the dragon, draws his sword and gets into arcade adventuring. The objective is simply to get to the end of the massive, horizontally-scrolling level. But it's far from easy. This forest is inhabited by sabre-tooth tigers, fire-spitting plants and much more besides. Simply hack'n'slaying isn't enough. There's magical walkways which fall from the air, form and then disappear. There's flaming logs which must be put out, vines to swing on and moving logs to cross rivers on.

Subsequent levels include a snowy wasteland (with wind which pushes you backwards) and a superb rotating castle which sends out zillions of dragons — the final confrontation takes place inside.



Unreal is obviously designed to outdo *Shadow Of The Beast* as a superlative demonstration of the Amiga's graphics and sonics. In this is succeeds brilliantly. The arcade-adventure levels have superb graphics, full of detail and imagination. The huge palette of colours, smooth scrolling and the speed at which large creatures are whizzed about are something only an Amiga could do. Plenty of thought has gone into it, as is shown by the way the floating logs dip when you land on them. Gameplay is tough, but very satisfying. The mini-stages making up the huge levels all contain puzzles, usually fairly simple though some are quite nasty.

The 3-D sections feature some superb background graphics, with numerous levels of parallax scrolling working flawlessly. The actual graphics of obstacles and enemy creatures are a bit blocky close-up, but they're huge, fast-moving and imaginative. Playing it gives a real arcade feel.



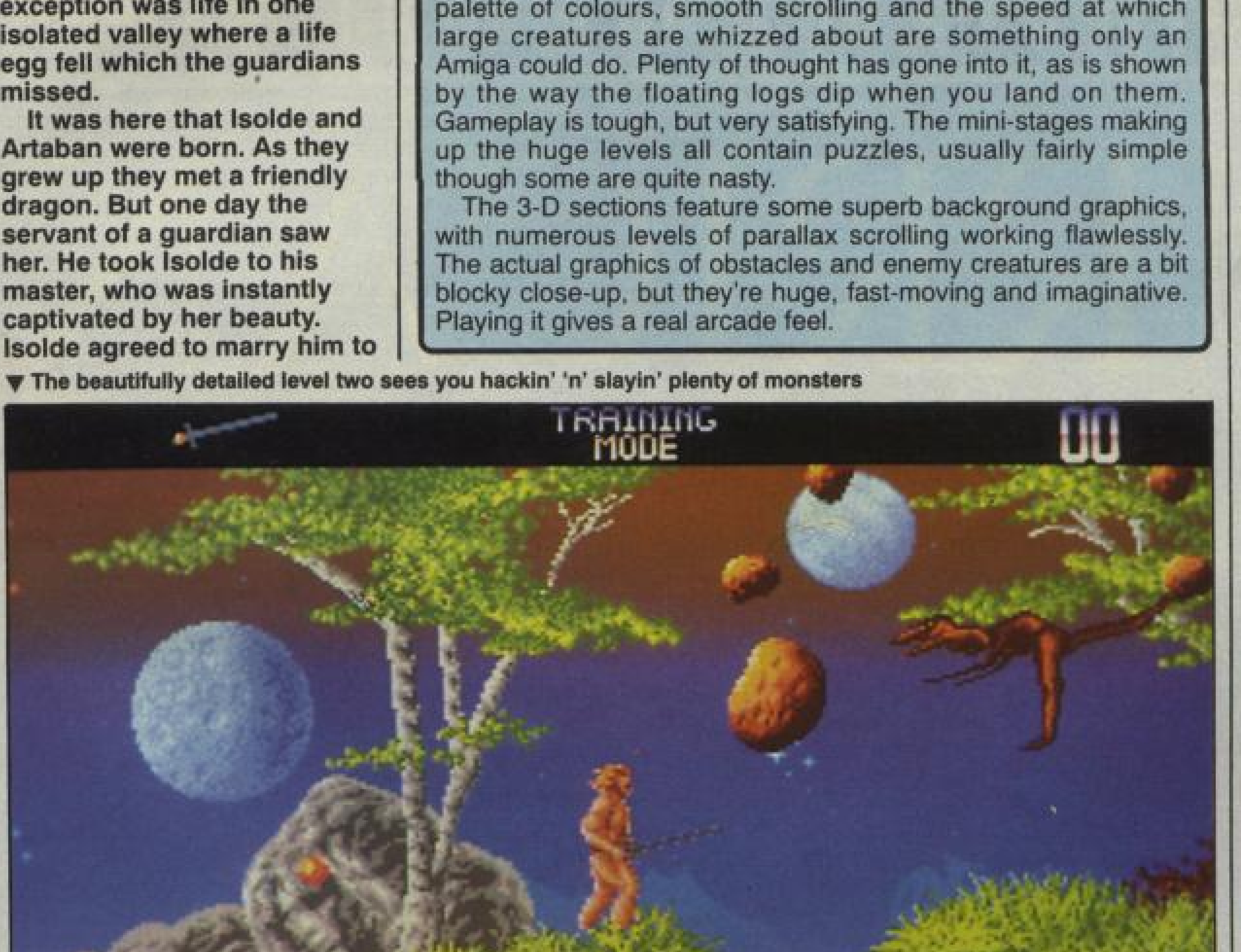
This is a quality product which uses the Amiga to the full. The horizontally scrolling stages are remincent of *Shadow Of The Beast* but I found the graphics more attractive in their subtlety while the gameplay is more varied with plenty of simple puzzles to solve. The 3-D levels are very impressive technically with their incredibly high speed, though the simple blast-it-all action gets a bit repetitive after a while. Still, *Unreal* is a super package, good value for money.

64

No plans for a C64 version. Not even the ST could cope with this one!

update

▼ **The beautifully detailed level two sees you hackin' 'n' slayin' plenty of monsters**



PRESENTATION 92%
Save at any time, three game-save positions, flashy attract mode, nice end sequence and a free poster. Three disks, but accessing is restricted to loading in the big levels.

GRAPHICS 94%
The 2-D sections show off the Amiga's palette to the full, while 3-D sections have a great arcade feel.

SOUND 88%
Brilliant samples, but five original soundtracks aren't that great.

HOOKABILITY 87%
Instantly playable.

LASTABILITY 87%
Lots to see and while very tough, save feature means it's do-able.

OVERALL 87%
A visual spectacular which plays well too.

SIZZLER



▲ World Three is the highly impressive vertically-scrolling shoot-'em- up. (Thanks to Pieter '*Venom Wing*' Opdam for playing through to get these shots!)

TURRICAN

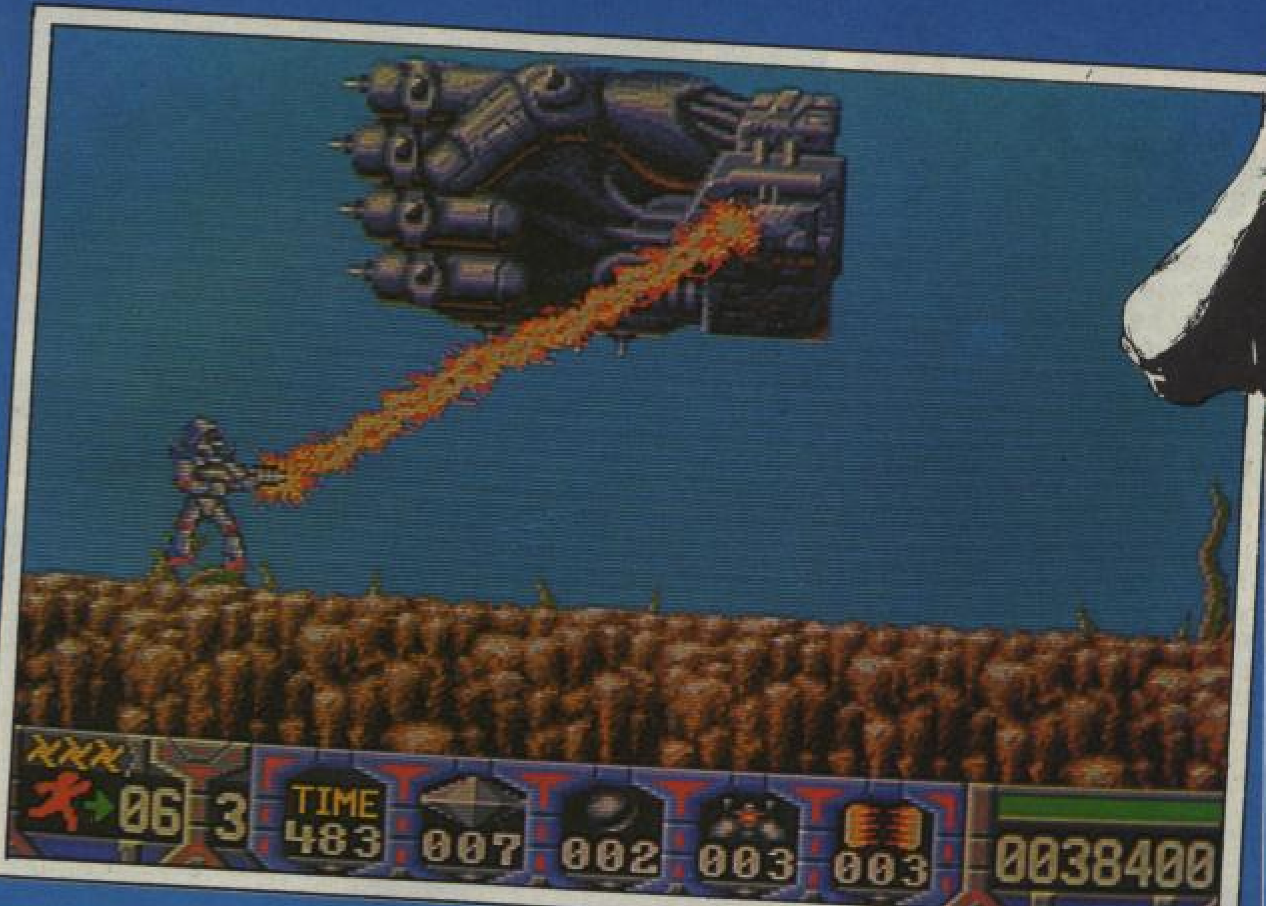
Rainbow Arts, Amiga £24.99

The C64 Gold Medal has finally spawned the inevitable Amiga conversion, and once again the world is under threat. Morgul is the three-headed demon which has been haunting Mankind's dreams for centuries. In ancient times Morgul was banished to an unknown dimension by the hero Devolon, his only influence on Earth the nightmares which disturbed people's sleep. Now the nightmares are escaping into everyday life with people afraid to venture outside their homes. Morgul's kingdom of dread is re-establishing its dominion and only one man still has courage enough to resist — the Turrican.

All of humanity's ingenuity and skill has gone into equipping him with the most fearsome weaponry. For defence he has a lightweight armour suit, its energy supply shown just above the score on the right. For offence he has a machine gun, grenades, mines, smart bombs and a lightning bolt (which can be rotated around

It's an astounding testimony to the brilliance of the C64 game that a fairly straightforward conversion has resulted in one of the best Amiga games we've seen. Five worlds and 1300 screens are massive for any machine! The graphics obviously aren't as astonishing as the C64's — we know the Amiga's got a blitter so massive end-of-level monsters aren't quite as dazzling. But the main sprite is superbly animated, his whole body moving as he walks. His weapons are no less impressive, with the lightning bolt particularly good, really sparking with amazing energy. There's also a bit more animation on the background graphics, which obviously use more colours and detail to ensure a real 16-bit feel. This is a vast game, packed with graphic imagination, gameplay variation and most of all, playability. I particularly like the world where the scrolling goes vertical, for an all-out shoot-'em-up with our hero strapping on a jetpack. The graphics have a *Salamander* feel, while the soundtrack sounds just like something Konami might write. Also good are the different ways you can play the game. To start with you rush around looking for the exit, trying to speed through the levels to see yet more of the graphics. But later on you get a bit wiser and start looking for the numerous treasure rooms, hidden away in the most obscure locations but packed with shimmering diamonds. Using this technique it's possible to build up lots of continue-plays, making it all seem almost possible to complete. All in all, a huge game which is recommended for anyone wanting a top-notch arcade blast.





▲ Fighting back against heavy-handed treatment with the lightning bolt.

the player). Some aliens leave symbols when shot: these can give extra grenades, smart bombs and mines, extend the lightning flash to the length of the screen and improve the laser gun with triple shot or replace it with a laser. In an emergency Turrican can even change into a small, fast moving gyroscope.

All this incredible firepower is vital since Morgul's kingdom is vast, including five different worlds. Three worlds are split into three levels, while two have just two levels. Fortunately Turrican begins with three lives, and three continue-plays. More lives can be got by collecting special symbols, while further continue-plays are earned by collecting 300 of the diamonds which can be found on the worlds.

▼ You're not the only one who can throw lightning bolts — a copyright warning from Above!





This is set to become a classic! The C64 game astonished us with its technical excellence, and although the Amiga version isn't quite as amazing it plays just as well as its 8-bit counterpart. It has a great arcade feel to it all with beautiful backgrounds (completely different for each world) and detailed animation (especially on the swaggering hero). I also love the varied, dramatic music which heightens the atmosphere: this includes some heavy, pounding tracks and the brilliant *Alien* world one which consists of an eery roaring sound effect. This 'distant storm' is just like being on LV426 with Sigourney and Co. What's more, unlike many games nowadays you have both the music and the FX simultaneously. The latter are really good, even if the lightning bolt sounds like an electric shaver!

The most impressive thing is gameplay, though. The levels are huge and great fun to explore while Turrican's range of weaponry and special features adds a dose of strategy in knowing when to use what: the rotating lightning bolt must be one of the best weapons in *any* game. In fact, I can't help feeling *Turrican would make a brilliant coin-op: it's got better, more varied gameplay than most coin-op conversions! This is original arcade action at its best, fully making use of the Amiga's capabilities.*



The C64 game was technically brilliant, crammed to busting with graphic styles and wonderfully playable — all things that 16-bit conversions rarely manage to replicate well without being accused of not using the host machine. *Turrican* changes things quite dramatically with super slick scrolling taking you around some truly massive levels. All credit to Manfred Trenz for the original C64 version as the gameplay was superb to start with and comes across intact. The flow of the game is remarkably quick, it's very easy to run into trouble and with some incredible mother aliens those continue-plays are very welcome indeed (the mega piranha fish may not be quite as good as its C64 brother but it moves horribly quickly!). Rainbow Arts have taken the time to use the Amiga's capabilities with good compression techniques allowing each world to have all sub-levels in one load, a different tune per level (the level 3 music is even better with 16-bit power behind it), expanded levels and of course, true Amiga quality use of colours and graphic detail. A great blast (the best I've seen on the Amiga) and one to really get the blood racing. First division stuff.

PRESENTATION 88%
Good title-page and brief opening effect. Good manual and vital continue-plays. High scores saved to disk and rapid world loading.

GRAPHICS 94%
Five very different worlds, all packed with masses of aliens. The variety is amazing. Main sprite is impressively animated.

SOUND 94%
Twenty excellent soundtracks showing lots of variety and imagination. FX are good too.

HOOKABILITY 95%
Easy to get into, with a wide variety of weapons all easily controlled.

LASTABILITY 94%
13 levels (over 1300 screens), five worlds with widely varying graphics and different challenges — including a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up.

OVERALL 94%
A superlative shoot-'em-up.

TIE BREAK



Starbyte/Ocean, Amiga
£24.99

You cannot be serious: another tennis game?! Yes, and every one seems to be viewed from a new angle. Starbyte's utilises a scrolling, *Passing Shot*-style overhead view with the ball getting bigger as it rises (Stiffy Innuendos Inc).

Matches can be singles (against one of sixteen computer opponents or another human) or doubles (allowing four players to compete using the Microdeal joystick adapter). The Tournament option allows you to play in several major international competitions including, of course, Wimbledon. The World Tournament option has the sixteen players (computer or human) playing round robin (eh? — Rob H).

The action is similar in some ways to Palace's *International 3-D Tennis* with the moving automatically towards the path of the ball. Pushing the joystick in one of four directions (for topspin, stop volley, lob, or normal shot) causes the player to hold the racket back, ready to swing forward when the joystick is recentred — timing determines the direction of the shot.



After winning about half a dozen points in a whole match against the computer I felt like smashing my joystick. This game is difficult. Okay, getting to the ball's no problem but you need exact timing to play good shots: slicing the ball time and time again into the net or out is so frustrating. Thankfully, the two- and four-player modes are fun, and the sampled speech scoring adds atmosphere.



This reminds me a lot of *Passing Shot*, but with a few extras such as the tournaments. Some frustration is avoided by the automatically positioning for each shot, but you only have four shots at your disposal with little control over their strength. The scrolling court is also a bit disorientating. Still, I managed to beat Phil with my superior tactics and found the game more playable against puny humans than the super-efficient computer players.

64

A C64 version is due soonish.

update

PRESENTATION 80%
Plenty of options including fun four-player mode. Humourous cartoon piccies of computer opponents.

GRAPHICS 63%
Bland, featureless scrolling court. Okay player sprites.

SOUND 70%
Okay title tune. Good sampled umpire speech, crowd and hitting FX.

HOOKABILITY 70%
Good fun in the multi-player modes.

LASTABILITY 61%
Computer opponents provide a tough if frustrating challenge.

OVERALL 67%
A fun but simplistic tennis sim.

SKIDZ



This is rather dated in concept, a sort of *Paperboy* goes city cleaning, but it plays remarkably well. Learning the route through is good fun, while the bike and skateboard are distinctly different, the latter faster, thinner but less manoeuvrable. The graphics are good, different for each level and with very smooth multi-directional scrolling. Nothing new perhaps, but scores high on playability.

Gremlin, Amiga £19.99

All those government ads where yobs dropping litter become instantly unattractive to the opposite sex are working! It's rad to be tidy, so you've set out to clean this city up by collecting litter while zooming around on either your BMX bike or skateboard.

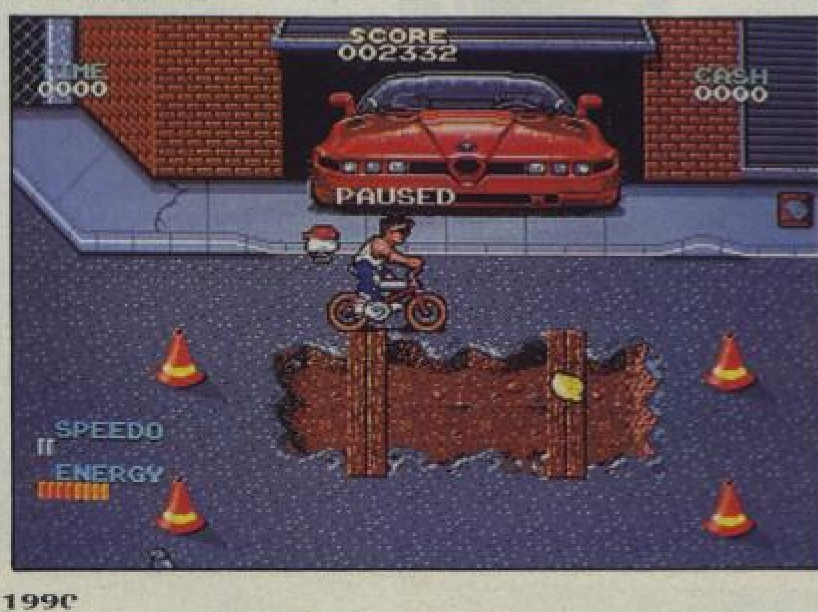
On each of six levels your objective is to collect 75% of the litter. Only ten items of rubbish can be carried, so it's as well there's plenty of bins around. Picking up stopwatches increases your time limit, while half-eaten choccie bars and apple cores (urghh!) boost energy. But watch out for holes in the road, jaywalking pedestrians and pigeons!

Completing a level allows you to visit the shop to spend any money you might have picked up on repairs — to your bike and yourself. Complete all six levels and you get to race against two other, computer-controlled rad lads (this event can be practised at any time).



This reminds me a lot of *Skate Crazy* but boosted with the addition of a bike to ride. I wasn't too impressed by the gameplay which lacks major depth but it's all very enjoyable stuff with a good variety of cartoonish graphics spread around six levels. I found it a little fiddly in places to get out of a corner when the bike/board got stuck and the hop is a little tricky to implement. But it's good that you can retry a level to boost your energy for the next section.

▼ When time runs out, an irritating little baddie whizzes around you draining energy.



PRESENTATION 62%
Choice of bike or skateboard and ability to continue from level you die on.

GRAPHICS 70%
Make reasonable use of the Amiga, with full screen multi-directional scrolling.

SOUND 75%
Jolly soundtrack which changes as you pick things up.

HOOKABILITY 70%
Attention to detail improves a simplistic game to the standards of coin-op (albeit a dated one).

LASTABILITY 61%
The levels aren't that difficult, especially with unlimited continue plays, but you can try it on both skateboard and cycle.

OVERALL 64%
Simple, but surprisingly playable.

THE 1990 ATARI ST PRODUCT GUIDE

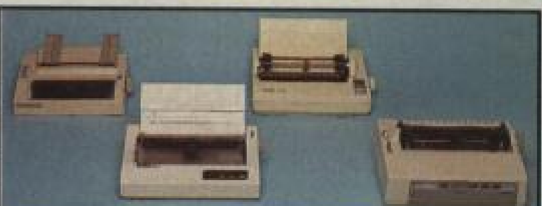
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SIZZLER



▲ Phil shows off his complete lack of taste in his appalling Clee Hill strip.

KICK OFF 2

Anco, Amiga £24.95 (including World Cup '90 — £19.95 without)

The long awaited sequel to the 'Amiga Game Of 1989' (as voted by you) boasts a huge array of new options including an optional World Cup Tournament.

As in the original, matches are played on an overhead-view, scrolling pitch with a 'radar' scanner showing the positions of off-screen players. Unlike most other football sims, the ball doesn't stick to players' feet for dribbling — it must be pushed along manually. As well as shooting, passing, heading and chipping, improvements to the control system allow you to swerve the ball and perform scissor-kicks.

Tackling is achieved by running into the front of the player in possession or by performing a sliding tackle. However, if mistimed, the latter can cause a foul: sometimes punished by a yellow or red card and, in the box, by a penalty kick. A new feature is the setpiece freekick which occurs when a player is fouled just outside the opposition's box. By moving the joystick with fire, several types of freekick can be attempted including stepping over the ball, passing to a nearby player or putting left/right bias on the kick. Aftertouch allows the ball to be swerved and dipped — useful for bending the ball around the wall of defensive players which automatically lines up.

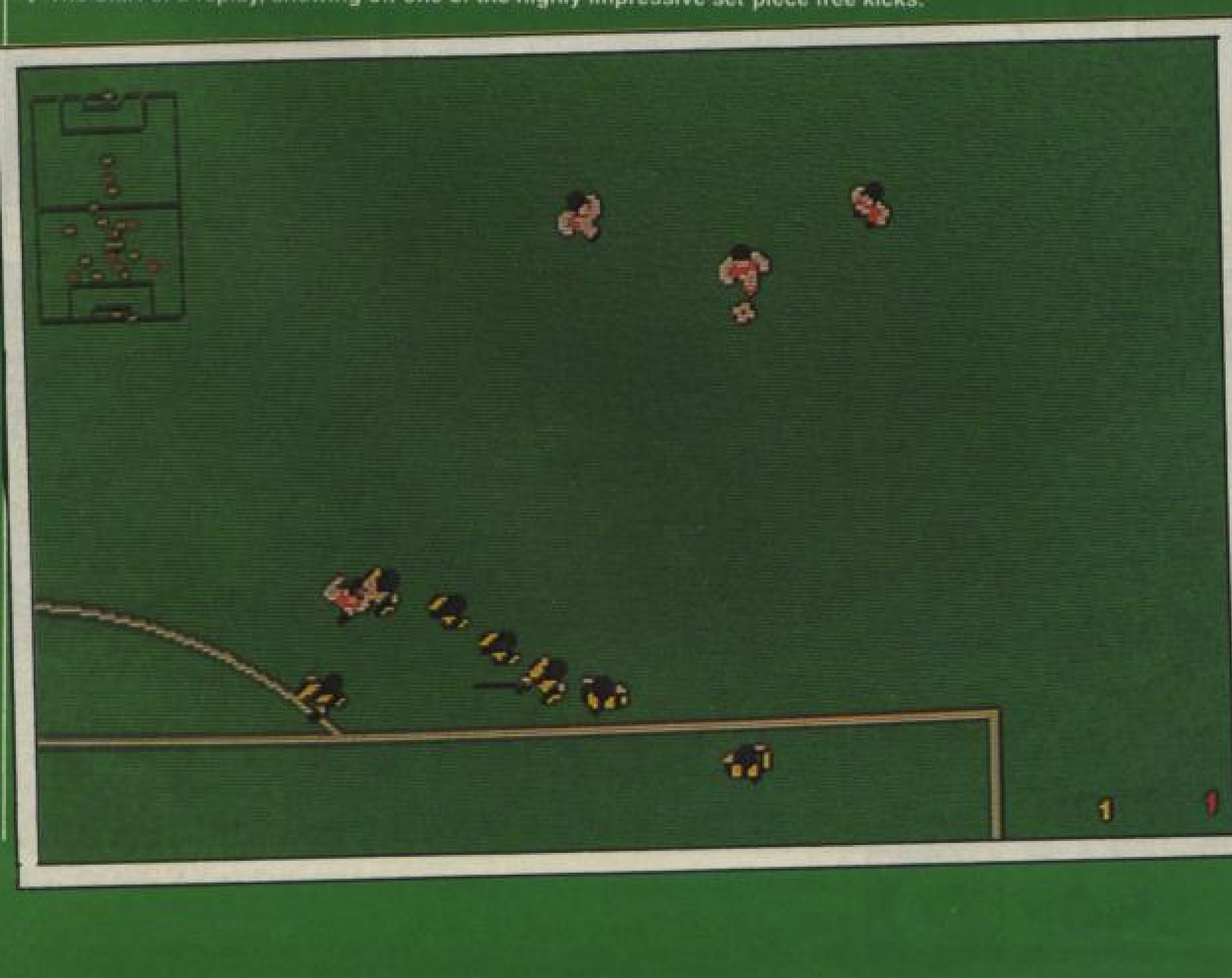
If you score a great goal you can replay it at slow or normal speed and save it on a blank disk. Saved goals can even be edited to compile a 'Golden Goals' disk.

Before a match you get to select your team members from the squad (including two subs which can be put on at any time). Starting tactics can also be chosen although these may be changed at any time during the match. You can choose to play either for the whole team (switching between players) or in position (controlling just one player).

For Single or International Friendly matches, up to four players can take part (one or two versus two) using a Microdeal joystick adapter. Alternatively, two players can team up against a computer opponent.

The game includes a *Kick*

▼ The start of a replay, showing off one of the highly impressive set piece free kicks.





I loved the original so when I heard about a sequel I wondered how it could possibly be improved. Well, the great news is that somehow Dino Dini has managed to put all the best features of *Kick Off*, *Extra Time* and *Player Manager* (along with many new ones) into one game.

The basic high-speed arcade action of *Kick Off* has been retained but the sequel is a far more realistic game of football. The basic control system has been tweaked with optional aftertouch. A major improvement is the addition of setpiece freekicks: they're totally realistic with before- and aftertouch allowing infinite variety, and they also discourage 'professional' fouling just outside the box! Corner kicks have also been made more difficult (and realistic) by the power function. One of the most frustrating aspects of the original was when your computer-controlled goalie or throw-in taker would sometimes give the ball straight to the opposition, so the player-controlled goal-kicks and throw-ins are very welcome.

Being a *Player Manager* fan, I appreciated the way teams and tactics created in that game can be loaded up for two-player games to settle arguments about who's got the best team. The inclusion of many other aesthetic options (I love creating flashy kit designs) and the optional World Cup tournament is the icing on the cake for the PERFECT football game.

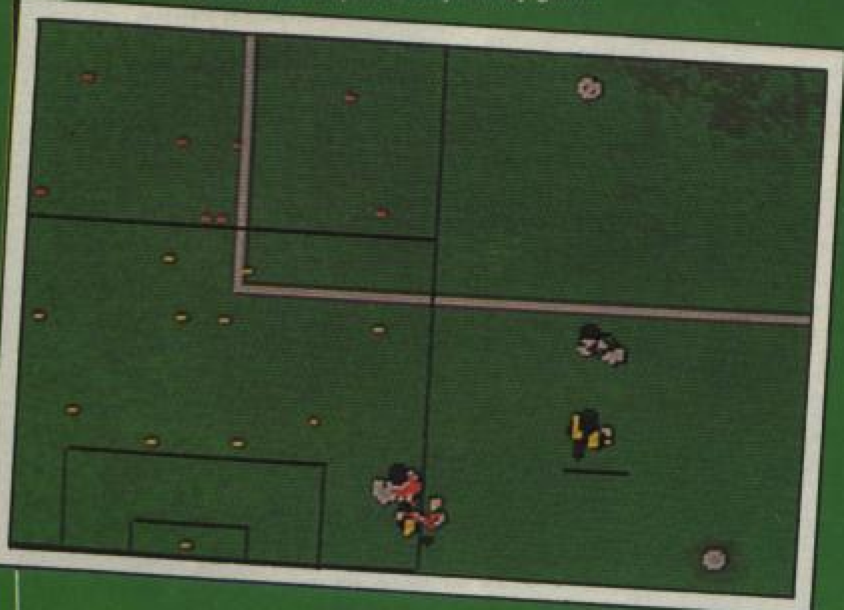


▲ Goaaal! England go one up against Italy in the World Cup Final!

Off-style league of eight teams, knockout cup, and practice mode. There are options to change pitch type (affecting the behaviour of the ball), wind speed, match duration, and tactics (four can be chosen from the eight available or others loaded in from *Player Manager*), and skill level (including one which allows you to load a team from *Player Manager*). The Kit Design option allows you to design your team's kit, choosing the strip style (plain, stripes, hoops etc) and colours.

Finally, the Special Events option allows you load future data discs including the optionally built-in World Cup tournament. This has all 24 teams (in their correct groups), any of which can be player-controlled.

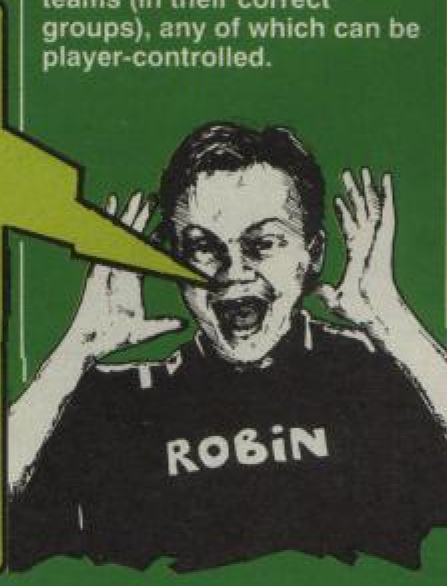
▼ A wealth of options, all easily manipulated with minimal disk access, add up to a very classy game.





There's no escaping the World Cup, with even *Kick Off 2* coming with it — for an extra £5. Other additions include masses of useful stuff from saving replays to designing team uniforms — Phil's are particularly ghastly, a form of visual terrorism!

But what about the game itself? Initially it seems very disappointing — not seeming that much different, other than being slower. However the more you play it, the better it gets. Simply blasting the ball down the pitch and relying on lightning reactions for a goal won't do anymore. Now you've got to slowly build up your moves — accurate passing and smart tactics are vital. All this means it's less of an arcade game, and much more of a football sim. I was a bit disappointed by this, until I started getting the hang of it. Then the game really came alive, with some great midfield action. Tackling, passing and dummying the goalie (who comes out almost as much as Columbia's goalie!), are all much more important. There's also the much appreciated ability to cripple the opposition's star player. FIFA might not like it, but I certainly enjoyed spilling a bit of blood! All in all, the best football game has got even better!



Although I'm not the best of footballers this is the best games I've seen this month. It goes without saying that the sequel to Phil's fave is by far and away the best footie game yet seen on a microcomputer. The core of the program (the actual football match itself) initially doesn't seem all that different from *Kick Off* and *Extra Time* but once you experience the flexibility of taking free kicks, goal kicks and corners you quickly realise just how far advanced the sequel is over the original. As expected it plays brilliantly as a two-player game but now with a four-player mode it's out of this world. The Action Replay feature can quickly make friends into enemies as goal scorers relish their victory (and then have the nerve to save the goal to disk!).

What I want to know is, what happened to the promised animated linesmen and ref? And what about a country-specific league, or the FA Cup? But I guess I'm being very, very picky, *Kick Off 2* is a great sequel and not just a revamp of the original. A big jump over *Kick Off* and a massive leap over all other football games around. I'm over the moon, Greavsie!

64

A full review next issue.

update

PRESENTATION 96%
An incredible array of options, accessed by user-friendly menus. Good manual.

GRAPHICS 83%
Slightly improved over *Kick Off* with different pitch types and 'designer' strips!

SOUND 60%
Limited to whistle and crowd FX.

HOOKABILITY 94%
As instantly playable and addictive as the original. Extra fun with three or four players.

LASTABILITY 95%
The many options create extra variety — and no two matches are ever the same.

OVERALL 94%
The ultimate football sim.

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VIVID SENSE OF HISTORY

AVivid Image are both a new Activision label and a programming team. The latter includes Mev Dinc, Hugh Riley and John Twiddy who made such an impact with *The Last Ninja II*. Their first Vivid release was the sizzling *Hammerfist*. Their latest is *Time Machine*, the most innovative arcade adventure in a long while.

Time travelling has inspired countless books and movies ever since HG Wells' classic 'Time Machine' hopped eras all the way up to the end of the Earth. The opportunities for mind-boggling paradoxes have fascinated everyone, with even Superman getting in on the act — flying into the past to save Lois Lane from the accident which killed her. But few programmers have got to grips with the subject, typically using time travelling as a simplistic gimmick in such average arcade adventures as *Back To The Future*, *Time Runner* and *Time Tunnel*.

Although not based on the Wells novel, *Time Machine* has the time travelling concept at its core and could well be the first 4-D game! The plot features Professor Potts, a stereotypical mad scientist with untidy hair, a white lab coat and goggles. His obsession is travelling in the fourth dimension — time. But just as he completes his prototype a terrorist attack destroys it, throwing him into a time warp. (He never should have done those experiments on Roger and Bugs!)

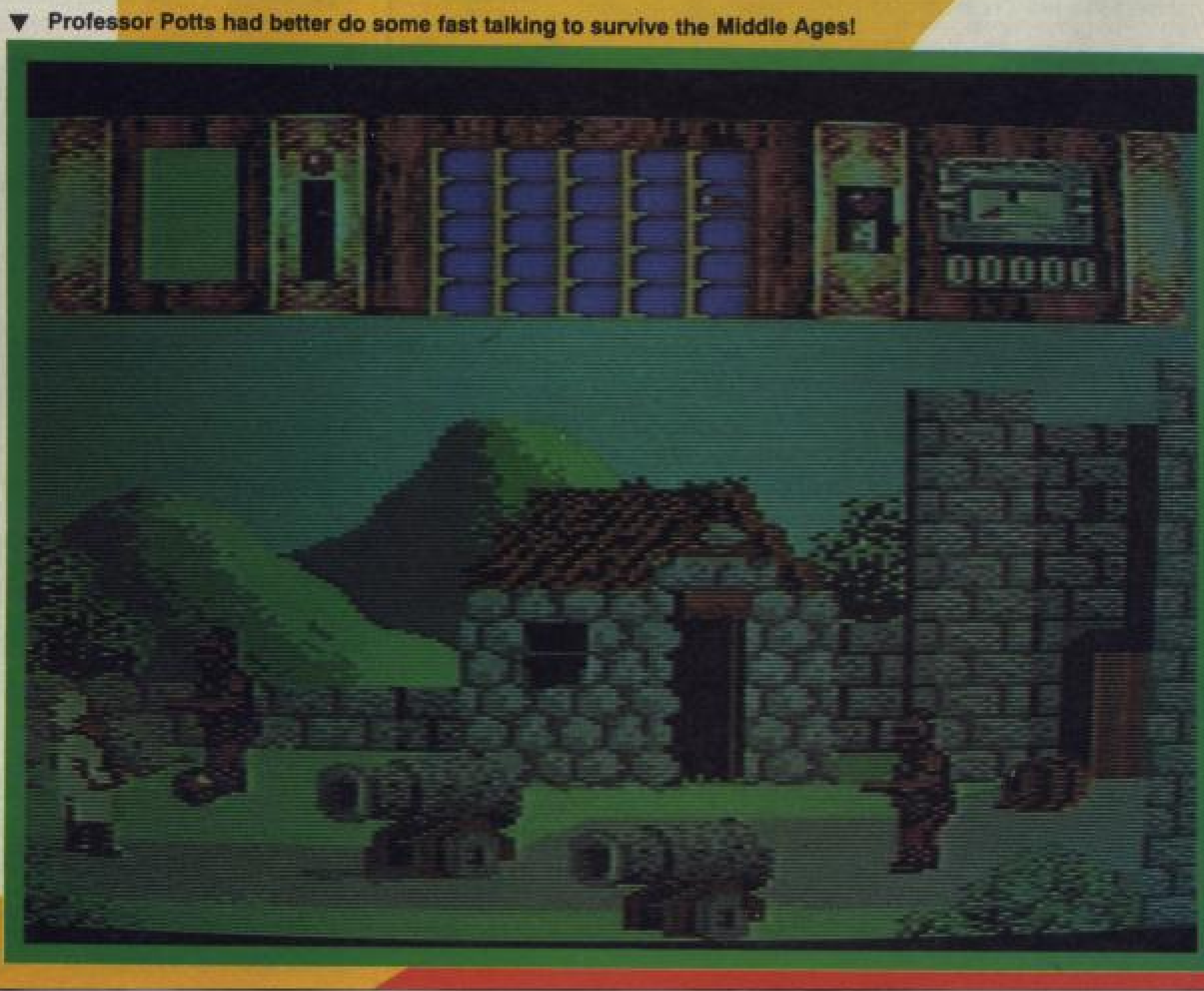
Potts arrives in prehistoric times, ten million years ago. His objective is to manipulate history to ensure the emergence of Mankind through five eras: Prehistoric, Ice Age, Stone Age, Middle Ages and Modern Day. Before Potts can travel to zones later than prehistoric he must create them. Cooling down prehistoric times allows him to go into the Ice Age, but unless precautions are taken the cold will wipe out the mammals which evolve into Mankind! But merely creating a zone doesn't mean earlier ones can be ignored. While pottering (groan) around in medieval times the mammals in prehistoric times might be eaten by the dinosaurs, dragging you right back to the start of the game! There's also some neat puzzles, ie you might fail to plant a seed, so there's no tree in one era, and in the next a vital wooden bridge hasn't been built!

▼ **The Ice Age and the distinct lack of life other than the prof indicates his quest is not going so well.**





▼ **Professor Potts had better do some fast talking to survive the Middle Ages!**



The game concept is fascinating, and it originated with Lisa Wand — Hugh Riley's wife. From this idea Vivid Image began developing the game almost a year ago now. The 16-bit version is the only one being done in-house, by *Thing On A Spring* programmer Jason Perkins. Graphics are very much a team effort, with Hugh Riley doing backgrounds across most formats. Freelancer Dokk, who contributed to *Vendetta*, is doing status panels and loading screens. 16-bit sprites are by Shaun McClure, while music is in the hands of Wally Beben (who also wrote the *Hammerfist* soundtrack). More surprisingly, Hewson's *Stormlord* team are handling 8-bit programming. Raffaele Cecco is doing the Z80 versions, while Nick Jones handles the C64 game. The freelancers have also been improving the gameplay, with Raffaele including more shoot-'em-up elements which are added to the other versions.

All are agreed this is one of the most complicated projects they've ever worked on. Destroy an object in prehistoric times and the program doesn't merely have to calculate your points bonus, but also what effect it has on all the other zones. This has made it a nightmare to debug. Yet more headaches are caused by all the rapid era-hopping which happens late in the game. Even an Amiga would be hard-pressed to cope with so much multiloading, so it's all going to be a single load! Partially as a consequence there's only five screens per flickscreen level, but the numerous historical puzzles, and fast breeding monsters such as dinosaurs and yetis, make it a formidable challenge. Despite several times wondering if it wasn't too complex to be done, Vivid Image aim to have it completed for August. Expect C64 and Amiga reviews in a month's time!



▼ **Hurrah! you've discovered fire. But are those gopher-like creatures really Man's ancestors?**



▼ ***Satan* is an incredible looking new arcade adventure from Spanish software house Dinamic. (C64)**



▼ **Hewson's *Stormlord II: Deliverance* is coming soon, with even bustier fairies and loads more arcade action. (C64)**



▼ **Simulmondo's *F1 Manager* is Italy's bid for racing fame on the C64. It has to be more reliable than F1 Ferraris!**



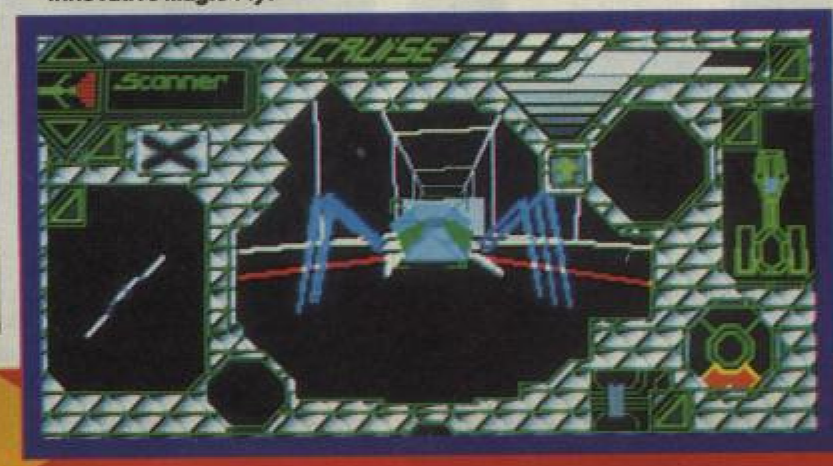
▼ ***Italy Soccer 90* is the Italian's bid for the best C64 World Cup tie-in. Let's hope it does better than 1-0 against USA. Ho ho!**



▼ **Mindscape's *Skid Marks* includes a track construction kit, multiple camera views and several cars to choose from. Loony driving must be provided by you! (Amiga)**



▼ **Electronic Arts' latest Amiga product is the very strange and innovative *Magic Fly*.**





▲ Psygnosis's *Shadow Of The Beast II*. It looks like our hero has had a dramatic haircut!

▼ Is that slimey Bob thing really Bob Monkhouse? Find out in Psygnosis's *Killing Game Show*. (Amiga)



▼ Psygnosis' *Dr Mallet* marks a distinctly new approach, with genuinely cartoon-style graphics. (Amiga)



▼ This *Hot Rod*-style game is likely to be released on the Psyclapse label. (Amiga)





▲ *Beast II* will feature a stronger adventure element to go with the spectacular graphics and arcade action which distinguished the original. (Amiga)

▼ What can you say? It's from Psygnosis and obviously called *Awesome*. Apparently the screen rotates around your spaceship. (Amiga)



▼ Still in a very early stage of development, Psygnosis' incredible *Walker* allows you to fire in all directions, into and out of the screen as the baddies swirl about. (Amiga)



THE SPY WHO LOVED ME (Domark)

▼ The best Bond movie ever — *The Spy Who Loved Me* — coming soon across all formats from Domark. (Amiga)



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